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The Sea Bride

THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENTFUL WHALING-CRUISE

By Ben Ames Williams

Author of "The Murder Ship," "Swords of Wax," "Three in a Thousand," etc.,

IN "The Sea Bride" the author has dragged from the very depths an epic of the ocean. It is full of the spindrift and mist of the wide waters, the mutterings of mutiny, the treachery of intriguers striving to break the law of the sea. It is a story of whaling days, when the deck of a ship was a floating empire and the captain its autocratic ruler. It has all the ingredients of a great American novel—a romance with the tang of the salt and the thrill of adventurous life.—THE EDITOR.

THEY were to be married before the open fire, in the big living-room of the old house on the hill. Up-stairs, Bess Holt was helping Faith dress. Faith sat before the old, veneered dressing-table with its little mirror tilting on the curved standards, and submitted quietly and happily to Bess's ministrations. Bess was a chatterbox, and her tongue flew as nimbly as the deft fingers that arranged Faith's veil.

Faith was content; her soft eyes resting on her own image in the little mirror were like the eyes of one who dreams dreams and sees visions. She scarce heard Bess at all.

Only once she turned and looked slowly about this low-ceiled old room that had been her home. The high, soft bed, with its canopy resting on the four tall posts; the high chest-of-drawers, the little dressing-table, the delicate chairs—these were all old and familiar friends, whom she was leaving behind her. And she loved them, loved the ugly paper on the wall, loved the old daguerreotypes above the chest of drawers, loved the crooked sampler that hung by the never-used fireplace. She loved all these things!

She smiled happily and confidently. She loved them, but she loved big Noll Wing better. She would not regret—

Below stairs, her father, Jem Kilcup, talked with Dr. Brant, the minister. They spoke of wind and weather, as men do whose lives lie near the sea. They spoke of oil, of ships, of tedious cruises when the seas were bare of whales.

Their talk wandered everywhere, save where their thoughts were; they did not speak of Faith nor of Noll Wing. Jem could not bear to speak of his girl who was going from his arms to another's; the minister understood, and joined with him in a conspiracy of silence. Only, when Bess came whispering down to say that Faith was ready, old Jem gripped Dr. Brant's arm and whispered harshly into the minister's ear:

"Marry them tight, and marry them hard and true, doctor. By God—"

Dr. Brant nodded.

"No fear, my friend," he said. "Faith is a woman—"

"Aye," said Jem hoarsely. "Aye; and she's made her bed. God help her!"

Things began to stir in the big house. Noll Wing was in the back room with Henry Ham, who had sailed with him three voyages and would back him in this new venture. Young Roy Kilcup had found them there. Old Jem had a demijohn of cherry rum, thirty years unopened. He sent it in to Noll; and Noll Wing smacked his lips over it cheerfully and became more amiable than was his custom.

Roy Kilcup caught him in this mood and took quick advantage of it. When the three came in where Jem and Dr. Brant were waiting, Roy crossed and gripped his father's arm.

"I'm going," he whispered. "Cap'n Wing will take me, as ship's boy. He's promised, dad."

Old Jem nodded. His children were leaving him; he was past protesting.

"I'm ready," Roy told his father. "I'm going to pack right after they're married." He saw Dr. Brant smile, and whispered: "Be quick as you can, sir."

The minister touched the boy's shoulder reassuringly.

"Quiet, Roy," he said. "There's time!"

People were gathering in the living-room from the other parts of the house. They came by twos and threes. The men were awkward and uneasy, and strove to be jocular; the women smiled with tears in their eyes. Bess Holt, alone, did not weep. She was to play the organ; she sat down upon

the stool and spread her pretty, soft skirts about her, and looked back over her shoulder to where Jem Kilcup stood out in the hall. He was to sign to her when Faith was ready.

Dr. Brant crossed and stood beside the fireplace where the logs were laid, ready for the match. Noll Wing and Henry Ham took stand with him.

Cap'n Noll Wing stood easily, squarely upon his spread legs. He was a big man; his chest swelled barrel-like; his arms stretched the sleeves of his black coat. Cap'n Wing was seldom seen without a cap upon his head. Some of those in that room discovered in this moment, for the first time, that he was bald.

The tight, white skin upon his skull contrasted unpleasantly with the brown of his leathern cheeks. The thick hair about his ears was tinged with gray. Across his nose and his firm cheeks tiny veins drew lacy patterns of purple. Garnished in wedding finery, he was nevertheless a man past middle life, and no mistaking—a man almost as old as Jem Kilcup, and wedding Jem Kilcup's daughter. He was an old man, but a man for all that; stout and strong and full of sap. He had the dignity of mastery; he had the bearing of a man accustomed to command and be obeyed. Roy Kilcup looked at him with eyes of worship.

Bess, watching over her shoulder, saw old Jem look up the stairs, then turn and nod awkwardly to her. She pressed the keys, the organ breathed, the tones swelled forth and filled the room. Still, over her shoulder, she watched the door, as did every other eye. They saw Faith appear there by her father's side; they saw her hand drop lightly on his arm. Jem moved; his broad shoulders brushed the sides of the door. He brought his daughter in and turned with her upon his arm toward where Noll Wing was waiting.

Faith's eyes, as she came through the door, swept the room once before they found the eyes of Cap'n Wing and rested there. That single glance had shown her Dan'l Tobey, behind the others, near the window; and the memory of Dan'l's face played before her as she moved toward where Noll waited. Poor Dan'l! She pitied him as women do pity the lover they do not love. She had been hard on Dan'l. Not her fault; but still the truth. Hard on Dan'l Tobey. And misery dwelt upon

his countenance, so that she could not forget, even while she went to meet Noll Wing before the minister.

While they made their responses, Noll in his heavy voice of a master, and Faith in the level tone of a proud, sure woman, her eyes met his and promised him things unutterable. It is this speaking of eyes to eyes that is marriage; the words are of comparatively small account. Faith pledged herself to Noll Wing when she opened her eyes to him and let him look into the depths of her.

A woman who loves wishes to give. Faith gave all herself in that gift of her quiet, steady eyes. Cap'n Wing, before them, found himself abashed. He was glad when the word was said, when the still room stirred to life. He kissed Faith hurriedly; he was a little afraid of her. Then the others pressed forward and separated them, and he was glad enough to be thrust back, to be able to laugh and jest and grip the hands of men.

The women and some of the men kissed Faith as she stood there, hanging on her father's arm. Then Bess Holt cried in dismay:

"Faith, the fire was never lighted!"

It was true. In the swift moments before Faith came down-stairs no one had remembered to touch a match to the kindling under the smooth, white-birch logs in the great fireplace. When Faith saw this she felt a pang of disappointment at her heart. She loved a fire, an open fire, merrily blazing.

She had always dreamed of being married before this great fire in her father's home. She herself had chosen these logs, and under her eye her brother Roy had borne them into the house and laid them upon the small stuff and kindling she had prepared. She had wanted that fire to spring to life as she and Noll Wing were married; she had thought of it as a symbol of the new life that was beginning for her and for her husband. She was terribly disappointed.

In that first pang she looked helplessly about for Noll. She wanted comfort pitifully. But Noll was laughing in the doorway, talking with old Jonathan Felt, the owner of his vessel. He had not heard, he did not see her glance. Bess Holt cried:

"Somebody light it quick! Roy Kilcup, give me a match. I'll light it myself. Don't look, Faith! Oh, what a shame!"

Roy knew how his sister had counted on that fire.

"I'll bet Faith doesn't feel as though she were really married," he laughed. "Not without a fire going. Do you, Faith? Better do it over, Dr. Brant."

Some one said it was bad luck; a dozen voices cried the same one down. Then, while they were all talking about it, round-faced Dan'l Tobey went down on his knees and lighted the fire that was to have illumined Faith's wedding.

Faith, her hand at her throat, looked for Noll again; but he and old Jonathan had gone out to that ancient demijohn of cherry rum. Dan'l was looking hungrily at her; hungry for thanks. She smiled at him. They were all pressing around her again.

Faith's luggage had already gone aboard. When she and Jem and Bess reached the wharf, the others were at the tables, under the boat-house, aft. They rose and pledged Faith in lifted glasses. Then Faith sat down beside her husband, at the head of the board, and old Jem settled morosely beside her. They ate and drank merrily.

Faith was very happy, dreamily happy. She felt the big presence of her husband at her side; and she lifted her head with pride in him, and in this ship which he commanded. He was a man. Once or twice she marked her father's silence, and once she touched his knee with her hand lightly, in comfort. Cap'n Wing made a speech. They called on Jem, but Jem was in no mind for chatter. They called on Faith; she rose and smiled at them, and said how happy she was, and laid her hand on her husband's shoulder proudly.

Roy came, running, after a time. And a little later the tug whistled from the stream, and Cap'n Wing looked overside, and stood up and lifted his hands.

"Friends," he said jocosely, "I'd like to take you all along. Come if you want. But—tide's in. Them as don't want to go along had best be getting ashore."

Thus it was ended; that wedding-supper on the deck, in the late afternoon, while the flags floated overhead, and the gulls screamed across the refuse-dotted waters of the harbor, and the tide whirled and eddied about the piles. Thus it was ended.

Old Jem kissed her first of all, kissed her roundly, crushing her to his breast; and she whispered, in his close embrace:

"It's all right, dad. Don't worry. All right. I'll bring you home—"

He kissed her again, cutting short her promise. Kissed her and thrust her away, and stumped ashore and went stockily off along the wharf and out of sight, never looking back. A solitary figure; somewhat to be pitied, for all his broad shoulders and his fine old head.

The others in their turn. Then every one waited, calling, laughing, crying, while the Sally Sims was torn loose from her moorings. Cap'n Wing was another man now; he was never one to leave his ship to another's care, Faith thought proudly. His commands rang through the still air of late afternoon; his eye saw the hawsers cast off, saw the tug take hold.

The Sally Sims moved; she moved so slowly that at first one must watch a fixed point upon the wharf to be sure she moved at all. Men were in the rigging now, setting the big, square sails. The wind began to tug at them. The voice of the mate, Mr. Ham, roared up to the men in profane commands. Cap'n Wing stood stockily on wide-spread legs, watching, joining his voice now and then to the uproar.

The sea presently opened out before them, inviting them, offering all its wide expanses to the Sally Sims's blunt bow. The Sally began to lift and tilt awkwardly. The tug had long since dropped behind; they shaped their course for where the night came up ahead of them. They sailed steadily eastward into the gathering gloom.

"Mr. Tobey!" bawled Cap'n Wing.

Dan'l came aft to where Faith stood with her husband. He did not look at her, so that Faith was faintly disquieted. The captain pointed to the litter of planks and boxes and dishes and food where the wedding-supper had been laid. Faith watched dreamily, happily. She had loved that last gathering with the friends of her girlhood. There was something sacred to her, in this moment, even in the ugly debris that remained.

But not to Cap'n Wing. He said harshly in his voice of a master:

"Have that trash cleared up, Mr. Tobey. Sharp, now."

Trash! Faith was faintly unhappy at the word. Dan'l bawled to the men, and half a dozen of them came shuffling aft. She touched her husband's arm.

"I'm going below now, Noll," she whispered to him.

He nodded.

"Get to bed," he said. "I'll be down."

He had not looked at her; he was watching Dan'l and the men.

II

For two weeks past Faith had been much aboard the Sally Sims, making ready the tiny quarters that were to be her home. When she came down into the cabin now, it was with a sense of familiarity. The plain table, built about the butt of the mizzenmast; the chairs; the swinging, whale-oil lamps—these were old friends, waiting to replace those other friends she had left behind in her bedroom at home. She stood for a moment at the foot of the cabin-companion, looking about her; and she smiled faintly, her hand at her throat.

She was not lonely, not homesick, not sorry. But her smile seemed to appeal to these inanimate surroundings to be good to her.

Then she crossed the cabin quietly and went into the smaller compartment, which was used by Cap'n Wing for his books, his instruments, his infrequent hours of leisure. This ran almost entirely across the stern of the ship; but it was little more than a corridor. The captain's cabin was on the starboard side, opening off this corridorlike compartment. There was scant room aft aboard the Sally Sims. The four officers bunked two by two in cabins opening off the main cabin; the mate had no room to himself. And by the same token, there was no possibility of giving Faith separate quarters. There were two bunks in the captain's cabin, one above the other. The upper had been built in during the last two weeks. That was all.

Faith had not protested. She was content that Noll was hers; the rest did not matter. She found a measure of glory in the thought that she must endure some hardships to be at his side while her man did his work in the world. She was, after the first pangs, glad that she must make a tiny chest and a few nails serve for wardrobe and dressing-room; she was glad that she must sleep on a thing like a shelf built into the wall, instead of her high, soft bed with the canopy at home. She was glad—glad for life—glad for Noll—glad for everything.

She began quietly to prepare herself for bed. And while she loosened her heavy hair and began the long, easy brushing that kept it so glossy and smooth, her thoughts ran back over the swift, warm rapture of

her awakening love for Noll. Big Noll Wing—her husband now; she his bride.

She had always worshiped Noll, even while she was still a schoolgirl, her skirts short, her hair in a long, thick braid. Noll was a heroic figure, a great man who appeared at intervals from the distances of ocean, and moved majestically about the little world of the town, and then was gone again. The man had had the gift of drama; his deeds held that element which lifted them above mere exploits and made them romance. When he was third mate of the old *Bertha*, a crazy islander tried to knife him and fleshed his blade in Noll Wing's shoulder, from behind. Noll had wrenched around and broken the man's neck with a twist of his hands.

He had always been a hard man with his hands, a strong man, perhaps a brutal man. Faith, hearing only glorified whispers of these matters, had dreamed of the strength of him. She saw this strength not as a physical thing, but as a thing spiritual. No one man could rule other men unless he ruled them by a superior moral strength, she knew. She loved to think of Noll's strength. Her breath had caught in ecstasy of pain that night he first held her close against his great chest till she thought her own ribs would crack.

Not Noll's strength alone was famous. He had been a great captain, a great man for oil. His maiden voyage as skipper of his own ship made that reputation for the man. He set sail, ran forthwith into a very sea of whales, worked night and day, and returned in three days short of three months with a cargo worth thirty-seven thousand dollars. A cargo that other men took three years to harvest from the fat fields of the sea; took three years to harvest, and then were like as not to boast of the harvesting. Oh, Noll Wing was a master hand for sperm oil; a master skipper as ever sailed the seas.

She remembered, this night, her first sight of him; her first remembered sight. It was when her father came home from his last voyage, his chest crushed, himself a helpless man who must lie abed long months before he might regain a measure of his ancient strength again. His ship came in, down at the wharves, at early dawn; and Faith and Roy, at home with their mother, had known nothing of the matter till big Noll Wing came up the hill, carrying Jem Kilcup in his arms as a baby is borne. Their mother opened the

door, and Noll bore Jem up-stairs to the bed he was to keep for so long. And Faith and Roy, who had always seen in their father the mightiest of men, as children do, marveled at Noll Wing with wide eyes. Noll had carried their father in his arms.

Faith was eleven then; Roy not much more than half as old. While Noll's ship remained in port she and Roy had stolen down often to the wharves to catch a glimpse of the great man; they had hidden among the casks to watch him; they had heard with awe his thundering commands. And then he sailed away.

When he came again Faith was thirteen; and she tagged at his heels, and he bought her candy and took her on his knee and played with her. Those weeks of his stay were witchery to Faith. Her mother died during that time, and Noll was her comforter. The big man could be gentle in those days and very kind.

He came next when Faith was sixteen; and the faint breath of bursting womanhood within her made Faith shy. When a girl passes from childhood, and feels for the first time the treasure of womanhood within herself, she guards that treasure zealously, like a secret thing. Faith was afraid of Noll; she avoided him; and when they met her tongue was tied. He teased her, and she writhed in helpless misery.

Nineteen at his next coming; but young Dan'l Tobey, risen to be fourth mate on that cruise with Noll, laid siege to her. She liked Dan'l; she thought he was a pleasant boy. But when she saw Noll, now and then, she was silent before him; and Noll had no eyes to see what was in the eyes of Faith. He was, at that time, in the tower of his strength; a mighty man, with flooding pulses that drove him restlessly. He still liked children; but Faith was no longer a child. She was a woman; and Noll had never had more than casual use for women. He saw her, now and then, nothing more.

Nevertheless, this seeing was enough so that Dan'l Tobey had no chance at all. Dan'l went so far as to beg her to marry him; but she shook her head.

"Wait," she whispered. "No, no. Wait."

"You mean—you will—some day?" he clamored.

She was frightened and cried out:

"No. I don't mean anything, Dan'l. Please—don't ask me. Wait."

He told her, doggedly, the day he sailed away, that he would ask her again when he came home. And Faith, sure as sure that she would never love Dan'l Tobey, was so sorry for him that she kissed him good-by; kissed him on the forehead. The boy was blind; he read in that kiss an augury of hope for the future, and went away with heart singing. He did not know the true philosophy of kisses.

Noll Wing, on that cruise, passed the great divide of life without knowing it. Till then he had been a strong man, proud in his strength, sufficient unto himself, alone without being either lonely or afraid; but when he came home there was stirring in him for the first time a pang of loneliness. This was the advance courier of age come suddenly upon him.

This unrest was stirring in him when he went to see old Jem Kilcup, and Faith opened the door to him and invited him to come in.

He came in, tugging at his cap, and his eyes rested on her pleasantly. She was tall, as women go, but not too tall; and she was rounded and strong and firm. Her hair was thick and soft, and her voice was low and full. When she bade him good evening, her voice thrummed some chord in the man; a pulse prickled faster in his throat.

He had come to see Jem; Jem was not at home. Faith told him this. In the old days he would have turned and stamped away. Now he hesitated; then looked about for a chair, sat down. And Faith, who for the life of her could not hold still her heart when Noll Wing was near, sat in a chair that faced him, and they fell a talking together.

Thus began their strange courtship. It was scarce conscious on either side. Noll took comfort in coming to her, in talking to her, in watching her. His pulses stirred at watching her. And Faith made herself fair for his coming, and made him welcome when he came.

They came together by chance one night when the moon played hide-and-seek with dark clouds in the sky; they met upon the street, as Faith came home with Bess Holt; and Noll walked with them to Bess's house, and then he and Faith went on together. She led him to talk of himself, as ever. When they came to her gate, some sudden impulse of unaccustomed modesty seized the man. He said hoarsely:

"But, pshaw, Faith! You must be sick of my old yarns by now."

She was silent for a moment there before him. Then she lifted her eyes, smiling in the moonlight, and she quoted softly and provokingly:

" . . . She thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her."

Noll Wing was no man of little reading. He understood, and cried out hoarsely.

'Twas then, the moon providentially disappearing behind a cloud, that he caught her and held her till her ribs were like to crack, while his lips came fumbling down to find her own.

Afterward, Faith hid her eyes in shame and scolded herself for frowardness, until he reassured her; she bade him, then, pay court in due form at her feet. He knelt before her, the big, strong man. And her eyes filled, and she knelt with him.

It was in her heart that she was pledging herself sacredly, with this man, forevermore.

Followed the swift days of preparation; a pleasant flurry, through which Faith moved calmly, her thoughts far off. Old Jem Kilcup was wroth; he knew Noll Wing, and tried to tell Faith something of this knowledge. But she, proud and straight, would have none of it; she commanded old Jem into silence, then teased him into smiles till he consented and bade her take her man.

So—marriage! It was done now—done. She was away with Noll, the world and life before them. Brave Noll, strong Noll. She loved him so!

When he came down into the cabin she was waiting for him. She had put on a dressing-gown, a warm and woolly thing that she and Bess had made of a heavy blanket, to protect her against the chill winds of the sea. Her braids were upon her shoulders; her hair parted evenly above her broad brow. Her eyes were steady and sweet and calm. Noll, studying her while his heart leaped, saw, where the dressing-gown parted at her throat, a touch of white, a spray of brodered blossoms which Faith herself had made, with every stitch a world of hope and dreams.

Faith lifted her eyes and came closer to him. He took her roughly in his arms,

and she lifted one arm and threw it around his thick neck, and drew his face down.

"Ah, Noll!" she whispered proudly.

III

FAITH WING fitted easily into the life aboard the Sally Sims, as the whaler worked eastward before starting on the long southerly slant that would bring her at last to her true hunting-grounds. The mates saw Faith daily as a pleasant figure in the life of the cabin; the boat-steerers and the seamen and greenies caught glimpses of her, now and then, when she sat on deck with sewing, or a book, or with idle hands and thoughtful eyes. Faith, on her part, studied the men about her, and watched over Noll, and gave herself to the task of being a good wife and helpmate to him.

The first weeks of the cruise were arduous ones, as they are apt to be on a whaler; for of the whole crew, more than half were green hands recruited from the gutters, the farms, the slums—weak men, in many cases, rotted by wrong living; slack-muscled, jangle-nerved; weak men who must be made strong, for there is no place for weakness in a whaler's crew.

It was the task of the mates to make these weaklings into men. The greenies must learn the rigging; they must learn their duties in response to each command; they must be drilled to their parts in the boats and prepared for the hunts that were to come. Your novice at sea has never an easy time of it; he learns in a hard school, and this is apt to be especially true upon a whaler. While the methods of the officers differed according to the habit of the officer, they were never gentle.

Cap'n Wing watched over all this, took a hand here and there. And Faith, quietly in the background, saw a new Noll, saw in each of the officers a man she had never seen ashore.

Noll was the master, the commander. When his voice bellowed along the decks, even the greenest man leaped and desperately strove in his efforts to obey. Noll was the dominant man, and Faith was pleasantly afraid of him and his roaring tones. She loved being afraid of him.

There were four officers aboard the Sally Sims. These four, with Roy—in his capacity of ship's boy—lived with Noll and Faith in the main cabin. They were Faith's family. Big Henry Ham, the mate, was a man of slow wit but quick fist; a

man with a gift of stubbornness that passed for mastery. The men of his watch, and especially the men of his boat, feared him acutely. He taught them this fear in the first week of the cruise, by the simple teachings of blows. Thereafter he relaxed this chastisement, but held a clenched fist always over their cowering heads. He had what passed for a philosophy of life, to justify this.

Dan'l Tobey, the second mate, was a man of another sort. Faith was startled and somewhat amused to find what a difference there was between Dan'l afloat and Dan'l ashore. Ashore, he was a round-faced, freckled, sandy-haired boy with no guile in him; an impetuous, somewhat helpless and inarticulate boy. Afloat, he was a man; reticent, speaking little, speaking to the point when he spoke at all. Shrewd, reading the character of his men, playing upon them as a musician plays upon his instruments.

Of the five men in his boat, not one but might have whipped him in a stand-up fight. Nevertheless, he ruled them. This one he dominated by cutting and sarcastic words that left the man abashed and helpless; that one he flattered; another he joked into quick obedience.

Dan'l had, Faith decided, more mental ability than any man aboard—short of her Noll. He ruled by his wits; and this the more surprised her because she had always thought Dan'l more than a little stupid. She watched the unfolding of the new Dan'l with keener and keener interest as the weeks dragged by.

James Tichel, the third mate, was a thin little old man given to occasional bursts of tigerish rage in which he was the match for any man aboard. In his second week he took the biggest man in his boat and beat him into a helpless, clucking wreck of bruises. Thereafter there was no need for him to strike a second time.

Willis Cox was fourth mate. He was a youngster; this his first cruise in the cabin. He had been promoted from the fo'c's'le by Noll Wing on Noll's last voyage. By the same token, he worshiped Noll as a demigod, with the enthusiasm of youth.

All these men had been changed, in subtle ways, by their coming to sea. Faith, during the first weeks, was profoundly puzzled and interested by this transformation. There was a new strength in all of them which she marked and admired. At the

same time there were manifestations by which she was disquieted.

Noll Wing—her Noll—had changed with the rest. He had changed not only in his every-day bearing, but in his relations with her. She was troubled, from the very beginning, by these changes; and she was troubled by her own reactions to them.

The pitiless intimacies of their life together in the cabin of the Sally Sims were hard for Faith. They shared two small rooms; and Noll must be up and down at all hours of day and night, when the weather was bad or the business of whaling engrossed him. Faith, without being vain, had that reverence and respect for herself which goes by the name of modesty. Her body was as sacred to her as her soul. The necessity that they were under of dressing and undressing in a tiny room not eight feet long was a perpetual torment to her.

She had been, when she married, prepared for disillusionment. Faith was not a child; she was a woman. She had the wisdom to know that no man is a heroic figure in a nightshirt. But she was not prepared to discover that Noll, who walked among men as a master, could fret at his wife like a nervous woman.

This fretfulness manifested itself more than once in the early stages of the voyage. For Noll was growing old, and growing old a little before his time because he had spent his life too freely. He was, at times, as querulous as a complaining old man. Because he was apt to be profane in these moods, Faith tried to tell herself that they were the stormy outbreaks of a strong man. But she knew better. When Noll, after they lost their second whale, growled to her:

"Damn Tichel! The man's losing his pith. You'd think a man like him could strike a whale and not let it get away."

Faith knew this was no just accusation against Tichel, but an out-and-out whine of irritability.

She knew this, but would not admit it, even in her thoughts.

Another matter troubled her. Noll Wing was a drinker. She had always known that. It was a part of his strength, she thought, to be able to drink strong liquor as a man should. But aboard ship she found that he drank constantly, that there was always the sickly-sweet smell of alcohol about him. And at times he drank to stupefaction, and slept, loglike, while Faith lay wide-eyed and

ashamed for him in the bunk below his. She was sorry; but because she trusted in Noll's strength and wisdom, she made no attempt to interfere.

More than once, when Noll fretted at her while others were about, she saw Dan'l Tobey's eyes upon her; and at such times she took care to look serene and proud. Dan'l must not so much as guess it, if Noll should ever make her unhappy.

But—Noll make her unhappy? The very thought was absurd. He was her Noll; she was his. When they were wedded, she had given herself to him, and taken him as a part of herself, utterly and without reservation. He might fail her high expectations in little things; she might fail him. But for all that, they were one, one body and soul so long as they both should live.

She was as loyal to him, even in her thoughts, as to herself. For this was Faith; she was Noll's forever.

She thought that what she felt was hidden; but Dan'l Tobey had eyes to see. And now and then, when in crafty ways he led big Noll to act unworthily before her, he watched for the shadow that crossed her face, and smiled in his own sly soul.

IV

THERE was, in Dan'l Tobey's boat, a little man named Mauger. It was he whom Dan'l ruled by a superior tongue, deriding the man and scorching him with jests that made Mauger crimson with shame for himself. Mauger was a greeny; he was a product of the worst conditions of the city. He was little and shrunken and thin, and his shoulders curled forward as though to hug and shelter his weak chest. Nevertheless, there was a ratlike spirit in the man, and a ratlike gleam in his black, little eyes. He was one of those men who inspire dislike, even when they strive to win the liking of their fellows. The very fo'c's'le baited him.

It was through Mauger that the first open clash between Cap'n Wing and Faith, his wife, was brought to pass; and the thing happened in this wise:

Dan'l Tobey knew how to handle Mauger; and he kept the little man in a continual ferment of helpless anger. When they were off in the boats after a whale, or merely for the sake of boat-drill, Dan'l gave all his attention to Mauger, who rowed tub-oar in Dan'l's boat.

"Now, if you'll not mind, Mauger," he would say, "just put your strength into the stroke there. Just a trifle of it. Gently, you understand, for we must not break the oars. But lean to it, Mauger. Lean to it, little man!"

And Mauger strove till the veins stood out upon his narrow forehead and his black, little eyes gleamed. And within him boiled and boiled a vast revolt, a hatred of Dan'l. Again and again he was on the point of an open outbreak; he cursed between his teeth, and slavered, and thought of the bliss of sinking his nails in Dan'l's smooth throat. The wrath in the man gathered like a tempest.

But always Dan'l pricked the bubble of this wrath with some sly word that left Mauger helpless and bewildered.

He set the man to scrub the decks, amidships, one day after an eighty-barrel bull whale had been tried out. There were other men at work scrubbing; but Dan'l gave all his attention to Mauger. He leaned against the rail and smiled cheerfully at the little man, and spoke caustically:

"Not used to the scrub-brush, Mauger. That's plain to see. But you'll learn its little ways. Give you time." And: "Here's a spot, here by my foot, that needs attention. Come. No, yonder. No, beyond that again. So." Or: "See, now, how the Portugee there scrubs." And when Mauger looked toward the Portugee, Dan'l rasped: "Come—don't be looking up from your tasks, little man. Attention, there!"

This continued until Mauger, fretted and tormented and wild with the fury of a helpless thing, was minded to rise and fling himself at Dan'l's round, freckled face. And in that final moment before the outbreak must surely have come, Dan'l said pleasantly:

"So. That is nicely. Go below now, Mauger, and rest. Ye've worked well."

And the kindness of his tone robbed Mauger of all wrath, so that the little man crept forward and down to his bunk and fairly sobbed there with rage and nerves and general bewilderment.

Dan'l was the man's master, fair.

This was one side of the matter; Cap'n Noll Wing was on the other side.

Noll Wing had been harassed by the difficulties of the early weeks of the cruise. It seemed to the man that the whole world combined to torment him. He was, for one thing, a compound of rasping nerves; the

slightest mishap on the Sally Sims preyed on his mind; the least slackness on the part of the mates, the least error by the men, sent him into a futile storm of anger. Even toward Faith he blew hot, blew cold. There were times when he felt the steadfast love she gave him was like a burden hung about his neck; and he wished he might cast it off, and wished he had never married her, and wished—a thousand things. These were the days when the old strength of the man reasserted itself, when he held his head high, and would have defied the world.

But there were other hours, when he was spiritually bowed by the burdens of his task; and in these hours it seemed to him Faith was his only reliance, his only support. He leaned upon her as a man leans upon a staff. She was now a nagging burden, now a peaceful haven of rest to which he could retreat from all the world.

If he felt thus toward Faith, whom, in his way, the man did love, how much more unstable was his attitude toward the men about him! Now, it is a truth which every soldier knows, that a commanding officer must command. When he begins to entreat, or to scold like a woman, or to give any other indication of cracking nerves, the men under him conspire maliciously to torment him, in the hope of provoking new outbreaks. It is instinctive with them; they do it as naturally as small boys torment a helpless dog. And it was so on the Sally Sims. The more frequently Noll Wing forgot that he was master, the more persistently the men harassed him.

His officers saw the change in Noll, and tried to hide it or deny it as their natures prompted. The mate, Mr. Ham, developed an unsuspected loyalty, covering his chief's errors by his own strength; and young Willis Cox backed him nobly. Dan'l Tobey, likewise, was always quick to take hold of matters when they slipped from the captain's fingers; but he did it a little ostentatiously. Noll himself did not perceive this ostentation; but the men saw, and understood. It was as though Dan'l whispered over his shoulder to them:

"See! The old man's failing. I have to handle you for him."

Once or twice Dan'l bungled some task in a fashion that provoked these outbreaks; and whether or not this was mere chance, Faith was always about on these occasions. For example: at dinner one day in the cab-

in, Dan'l looked mournfully at the salt beef that was set before him, and then began to eat it with such a look of resignation on his countenance that Noll demanded:

"What's wrong with the beef, Mr. Tobey?"

"Nothing, sir," said Dan'l pleasantly. "Nothing at all. It's very good fare, and almighty well cooked, I'd say."

Now, it was not well cooked. Tinch, the cook, had been hurried or careless. The junk he had brought down to the cabin was half raw, a nauseous mess. And Dan'l knew it, and so did Noll Wing. But Noll might have taken no notice but for Dan'l and Dan'l's tone.

As it was, he was forced to take notice. And so he bellowed for Tinch, and when the cook came running, Noll lifted the platter and flung it, with its greasy contents, at the man's head, roaring profanely.

Faith was at the table; she said nothing. But when Noll looked at her and saw the disappointment in her eyes—disappointment in him—he wished to justify himself, and so complained:

"Damned shame! A man can't get decent food out of that rascal. If I wasn't a fool, Faith, I'd have stayed ashore."

Faith thought she would have respected him more if, having given way to his anger, he had stuck to his guns instead of seeking thus weakly to placate her. And Dan'l Tobey watched Faith, and was well content with himself.

It was Dan'l, in the end, who brought Mauger and Cap'n Wing together; and if matters went beyond what he had intended, that was because chance favored him.

It was a day when Mauger took a turn at the awkward steering apparatus of the Sally Sims. The Sally's wheel was so arranged that when it was twirled it moved to and fro across the deck, dragging the tiller with it. To steer was a trick that required learning; and in any sea the tiller bucked, and the wheel fought the steersman in eccentric and amazing fashion. This antiquated arrangement was one of the curses of many ships of the whaling fleet. Mauger had never been able to get the trick of it.

Dan'l's watch came on deck and Mauger took the wheel at a moment when Cap'n Wing was below. Faith was with him. Dan'l knew the captain would be entering the log, writing up his records of the cruise, reading. He also knew that if Noll Wing

followed his custom, he would presently come on deck. And he knew—he himself had had a hand in this—that Noll had been drinking that day more than usual.

That Faith came up with Noll a little later was chance, no more. Dan'l had not counted on it.

Mauger, then, was at the wheel. Dan'l leaned against the deck-house behind Mauger, and devoted himself amiably to the task of instructing the man. His tone remained, throughout, even and calm; but there was a bite in it which seared the very skin of Mauger's back.

"You'll understand," said Dan'l cheerfully, "you are not rolling a hoop in your home gutter, Mauger. You're too impetuous in your ways. Be gentle with her."

This when, the Sally Sims having fallen off her set course, Mauger brought her so far up into the wind that her sails flapped on the yards. Dan'l chided him.

"Not so strenuous, Mauger. A little turn, a spoke or two. You overswing your mark, little man. Stick her nose into it, and keep it there."

The worst of it was, from Mauger's point of view, that he was trying quite desperately to hold the Sally's blunt bows where they belonged. But there was a sea; the rollers pounded her high sides with an overwhelming impact, and the awkward wheel put a constant strain on his none-too-adequate arms and shoulders. When the Sally swung off, and he fought her back to her course, she was sure to swing too far the other way; when he tried to ease her up to it, a following sea was sure to catch him and thrust him still farther off the way he should go.

He fought the wheel as if it were a live thing, and the sweat burst out on him, and his arms and shoulders ached; and all the time Dan'l at his back flogged him with gentle jeers and seared him with caustic words.

The ratlike little man had the temper of a rat. Dan'l knew this; he was careful never to push Mauger too far. So, this afternoon, he brought the man, little by little, to the boiling-point, and held him there as delicately in the balance as a chemist's scales. With a word, he might at any time have driven Mauger mad with fury; with a word he could have reduced the helpless little man to smothering sobs.

He had Mauger thus trembling and wild when Noll Wing came on deck, Faith at his

side. Dan'l looked at them shrewdly; he saw that Noll's face was flushed, and that Noll's eyes were hot and angry. And—behind the back of Mauger at the wheel—he nodded toward the little man and caught Noll's eye, and raised his shoulders hopelessly, smiling. It was as if he said:

"See what a hash the little man is making of his simple job. Is he not a hopeless thing?"

Noll caught Dan'l's glance; and while Mauger still quivered with the memory of Dan'l's last word, Noll looked at the compass, and cuffed Mauger on the ear and growled at him:

"Get her on her course, you gutter-dog!"

Which was just enough to fill to overflowing Mauger's cup of wrath. The little man abandoned the wheel—Dan'l caught it before the Sally could fall away—and he sprang headlong, face black with wrath, at Cap'n Wing.

He was scarce a third Noll's size; but the fury of his attack was such that for a moment Noll was staggered. Then the captain's fist swung home, and the little man whirled in the air and fell crushingly on head and right shoulder, and rolled on the slanting deck like a bundle of soiled old clothes—rolled and lay still.

Cap'n Noll Wing, big Noll, whom Faith loved, bellowed and leaped after the little man. He was red with fury that Mauger had attacked him, red with rage that Mauger had, for an instant, thrust him back. He swung his heavy boot and drove it square into the face of the unconscious man. Faith saw.

The toe of the captain's boot struck Mauger in the right eye-socket as he lay on his side. At the blow the man's eye literally splashed out.

Some women would have screamed; some would have flung themselves upon Noll to drag him back. Faith did neither of these things. She stood for an instant, her lips white. Her sorrow and pity were not for Mauger, who had suffered the blow. They were for Noll, her husband whom she loved and wished to respect, sorrow and pity for Noll, who had done this thing.

She turned quickly and went down into her cabin.

Noll came down minutes later, after she had heard the feet of running men, the voices of men upon the deck. He came down, found her in the cabin which served

as his office. She was standing, looking out one of the windows in the stern.

"That damned rat won't try that on again!" he said thickly.

She turned, and her eyes held his.

"That was a cowardly thing to do, Noll, my husband," she said.

V

WHEN Noll Wing kicked the unconscious man, and Faith slipped quietly away and went below, the life of the Sally Sims for an instant stood still. Yella' Boy and Loum, two of the boat-steerers, were lounging at the forward end of the boat-house, and saw. Dan'l Tobey, who had gripped the wheel, saw. And three or four of the men amidships saw. For a space they all stood still, watching, while Noll growled above his victim, and Mauger, limp and senseless, rolled slackly back and forth upon the deck with the motion of the vessel.

Then Noll looked around and saw them all watching him with steady, hard, frightened eyes; and their silence irked him so that he broke it with a cry of his own.

"You, Yella' Boy, sluice him off!" he shouted.

Yella' Boy grinned, showed his teeth with the amiability of his dark race; and he took a canvas bucket and dropped it over the rail, and drew it up filled with brine, and flung this callously in Mauger's crushed and wounded face. The water loosed the clotted blood, washed it away in flecks and gouts. The salt burned cruelly. Mauger groaned hoarsely and slumped back into unconsciousness.

"Douse him again," Noll Wing commanded. "The dog's shamming!" He looked around, saw Dan'l at the wheel. "You, Mr. Tobey, look to him."

Dan'l was one of those men whose hands have a knack for healing. He knew something of medicine; he had gone so far upon a former cruise as to trim away a man's crushed fingers after an accident of the whale fisheries had nipped them. He hailed one of the men in the waist now, and gave the wheel to this man, and then crossed to where Mauger lay, and knelt beside him and dabbed away the blood upon his face.

Cap'n Wing, leaning against the rail, his knuckles white with the grip he had upon it, watched Dan'l, and swayed upon his feet. And Yella' Boy, with his bucket still

half full of brine, stood by and grinned and waited.

Mauger came slowly back to life under Dan'l's ministrations; he groaned and he began to twitch and kick. And of a sudden he cried out, like one suddenly waking from sleep. Then consciousness flooded him, and with it came the agony he was enduring, and he howled. After a time his howls grew weak and weaker till he was sobbing. Then Dan'l helped him to his feet. He had put a rough bandage about the man's head, and from beneath this bandage one of Mauger's eyes looked forth, blackly gleaming, wild with the torment he endured. This eye fixed its gaze upon Noll Wing.

Dan'l stepped a little nearer Noll and said in a low voice:

"His eye is gone, sir. It 'll never be any good. It ought to be trimmed out—cleared away."

That shocked the liquor out of Noll; his face went white beneath the brown; and Mauger heard, and suddenly he screamed again and leveled a shaking finger at Noll Wing and cursed him shrilly. Dan'l whirled and bade him be silent; he signed to Yella' Boy, and the harpooner half dragged, half carried Mauger forward. But as they went, Mauger, twisting in the other's arms, shook his thin fist at Noll Wing and swore terribly—cursed Noll, called death down upon him, vowed that he would some day even the score.

Yella' Boy cuffed him and dragged him away. And Dan'l watched Noll to see what the captain would say. Noll said nothing. He took off his cap and rubbed his bald head and looked for an instant like an old man; his eyes shifted furtively from Dan'l to the cursing man.

Abruptly he turned and went aft to the stern of the ship and stood there by himself, thinking. He sought reassurance; he abused Mauger under his breath, and told himself the little man had been well served. The Sally fell away; he turned and cursed the new man at the wheel, and got relief from the oath he spoke. It gave him a blustering sort of courage. He wished Dan'l Tobey would tell him he had done right. But Dan'l had gone forward to the fo'c's'le. Mauger was howling. And Noll shuddered. He was, suddenly, immensely lonely; he wished with all his soul for friendly support, for a word of comfort, a word of reassurance.

He went down into the cabin, thinking to speak with Henry Ham. Mr. Ham was always an apostle of violence. But the mate was sleeping; Noll could hear him snore. So was tigerish little James Tichel.

Noll went into the after-cabin and found Faith there. Her back was turned, she was looking out of the stern windows. He wished she would look at him, but she did not. So he said, his voice thick with anger, and at the same time plaintive with hunger for a reassuring word:

"That damned rat won't try that again!"

Then Faith turned and told him:

"That was a cowardly thing to do, Noll, my husband."

He had come for comfort; he was ready to humble himself; he was a prey to the instinct of wrong-doing man which bids him confess and be forgiven. But Faith's eyes accused him. When a man's wife turns against him— He said, bitter with rage:

"Keep your mouth shut, child. This is not a pink tea aboard the Sally Sims. You know nothing of what's necessary to handle rough men."

Faith smiled a little wistfully.

"I know it is never necessary to kick an unconscious man in the face," she said.

He was so helpless with fury and shame and misery that he raised his great fist as though he would have struck even Faith.

"Mind your own matters," he bade her harshly. "The dog struck me. Where would the ship be if I let that go? I should have killed him."

"Did you not?" Faith asked gently. "I thought he would be dead."

"No; hell, no!" Noll blustered. "You can't kill a snake. He'll be poisonous as ever in a day."

"I saw," said Faith; she shuddered faintly. "I—think his eye is gone."

"Eye?" Noll echoed. "What's an eye? He's lucky to live. There's skippers that would have killed him where he stood. For what he did—"

Faith shook her head.

"He's only a little man, weak, not used to sea life. You are big and strong, Noll. My Noll. There was no need of kicking him."

The man flung himself then into an insane burst of anger at her. He hated the whole world, hated Faith most of all because she would not soothe him and tell

him never to mind. He raved at her, gripped her round shoulders and shook her, flung her away from him. He was mad.

And Faith, steadfastly watching him, though her soul trembled, prayed in her heart that she might find the way to bring Noll back to manhood again; she endured his curses; she endured his harsh grip upon her shoulders. She waited, while he flooded her with abuse. And at the end, when he was quiet for lack of words to say, she went to him and touched his arm.

"Noll," she said.

He jerked away from her.

"What?"

"Noll—look at me."

He obeyed, in spite of himself; and there were such depths of tenderness and sorrow in her eyes that the man's heart melted in him.

"It's not Mauger I'm sorry for," she told him. "It's you, Noll. That you should be so cowardly, Noll—"

His rage broke then; he fell to fretting, whining. She sat down; he slumped like a child beside her. He told her he was tired, weary; that he was worried; that his nerves had betrayed him; that the drink was in him.

"They're all trying to stir me," he complained. "They take a joy in doing the thing wrong. They're helpless, slithering fools. I lost myself, Faith."

He pleaded with her, desperately anxious to make her understand; and Faith understood from the beginning, with the full wisdom of woman, yet let him talk out all his unhappiness and remorse. And because she loved him, her arms were about him and his great head was drawn against her breast long before he was done. She comforted him with touches of her light hands upon his head; she soothed him with murmurs that were no words at all.

The man reveled in this orgy of self-abasement. He groveled before her until she began to be faintly contemptuous in her heart at his groveling. She bade him make an end of it.

"I was a coward, Faith!" he cried. "You're right. I was a coward."

"You are a man, Noll," she told him. "Stronger than other men, and not in your fists alone. That is why I love you so."

"I know, I know," he told her. "Oh, you're a wonder, Faith."

"You're a man—always remember that," she said.

He got up abruptly. He started toward the main cabin, and she asked:

"Where are you going, Noll?"

"Forward," he said. "I've wronged Mauger." He was drunk with this new-found joy of abasing himself. "I'll tell the man so. I'll right things with him." And he added thoughtfully: "He cursed me. I don't want the man's hate. I'll right things with him."

She smiled faintly, shook her head.

"No, Noll."

He was stubborn.

"Yes. Why not? I've—"

"Noll, you're the master of this ship," she said thoughtfully. "Old Jonathan Felt put her in your charge. You are responsible for her. And that puts certain obligations on you, Noll. An obligation to be wise, and to be prudent, and to be brave."

He came back and sat down beside her. She touched his knee.

"You are like a king aboard here, Noll. And—the king can do no wrong. I would not go to Mauger if I were you. You made a mistake; but there is no need you should humble yourself before the men. They would not understand; they would only despise you, Noll."

"Let them!" he said hotly. "They're sneaking, spineless things."

"Let them fear you; let them hate you," she told him. "But—never let them forget you are master, Noll. Don't go to Mauger."

He had no real desire to go; he wished only to bask in her new-found sympathy. And he yielded readily enough at last.

The matter passed abruptly. She rose; he went up on deck; the Sally Sims went on her way. And for a day or two Noll Wing, an old man, was like a boy who has repented and been forgiven; he was offensively virtuous, offensively good-natured.

Mauger returned to his duties the second day. He wore a bandage across his face; and when it was discarded a week later the hollow socket where his eye had been was revealed. His suffering had worked a terrible change in the man; he had been morose and desperate; he was now too much given to chuckling, as though at some secret jest of his own. He went slyly about his tasks; he seemed to have a pride in his misfortune; when he saw men shrink with distaste at sight of his scarred countenance he chuckled under his breath. In

the upper lid some maimed nerve persisted in living. It twitched, now and then, in such a fashion that Mauger seemed to be winking with that deep hollow in his face.

The man had a fascination, from the beginning, for Noll Wing. The captain took an unholy joy in looking upon his handiwork; he shivered at it, as a boy shivers at a tale of ghosts. And he felt the gleaming glance of Mauger's remaining eye like a threat. It followed him whenever they were both on deck together; if he looked toward Mauger, he was sure to catch the other watching him.

One night, as they were preparing to sleep, Noll spoke of Mauger to Faith.

"He does his work better than ever," he said.

She nodded.

"Yes?" And something in Noll's tone made her attentive.

"Seems cheerful, too," said Noll. He hesitated. "I reckon he's forgot his threat to stick a knife in me. Don't you think he has?"

Faith's eyes, watching her husband, clouded; for she read his tone. Noll Wing, strong man and brave, could not hide his secret from her. She understood that he was deathly afraid of the one-eyed man.

VI

THE Sally Sims was in the south Atlantic on the day when Noll Wing kicked out Mauger's eye. The life of the whaler went on, day by day, as a background for the drama that was brewing. The men stood watch at the mastheads; the Sally plunged and waddled awkwardly southward; and now and then a misty spout against the wide blue of the sea halted them; and boats were lowered, and the whales were struck and killed and towed alongside.

Held fast there by the chain that was snubbed around the fluke-chain bitt, they were hacked by the keen spades and cutting-knives, the great heads were cut off and dragged aboard and stripped of every fleck of oily blubber; and the huge bodies, while the spiral blanket strips were torn away, rolled lumberingly over and over against the bark's stout planks. Thereafter the try-works roared and the blubber boiled, and the black and stinking smoke of burning oil hung over the seas like a pall.

This smell of burning oil, the mark of the whaler, distressed Faith at first. It sickened her; and the soot from the fires

where the scrapple of boiled blubber fed the flames settled over the ship, and penetrated even to her own immaculate cabin. She disliked the smell; but the gigantic toil of the cutting-in and the roar of the try-works had always a fascination for her that compensated for the evil smell and the pervasive soot. She rejoiced in strength, in the strong work of lusty men. To see a great carcass almost as long as the Sally lying helpless below the rail never failed to thrill her.

For the men of the crew, it was all in the day's work—stinking, sweating, perilous toil. For Faith it was a tremendous spectacle. It intoxicated her; and in the same fashion it affected Noll Wing and Dan'l Tobey and tigerish old Tichel. When there were fish about, these men were subtly changed; their eyes shone, their chests swelled, their muscles hardened; they stamped upon the deck with stout legs, like a cavalry horse that scents the battle. They gave themselves to the toil of killing whales and harvesting the blubber as men give themselves to a debauch; and afterward, when the work was done, they were apt to surrender to a lassitude such as follows a debauch. There was keen, sensual joy in the running oil, the unctuous oil that flowed everywhere upon the decks; they dabbed their hands in it; it soaked their garments, and their very skins drank it in.

Cap'n Wing chose to go west, instead of around the tip of Africa and up into the Indian Ocean. So they passed through the Straits, fighting the wind day by day, and Faith saw the vast rocks towering into the skies on either side, each rock a mountain whose foot the waves were gnawing.

They slid out at last into the south Pacific, and struck a little north of west for the wide whaling grounds of the island-dotted South Seas. There they found their whales.

The routine of their tasks dragged on. But during this time a change was working in Noll Wing, which Faith and Dan'l Tobey and all who looked might see.

The Mauger incident had been, in some measure, a mile-stone in Noll's life. He had struck men before; he had maimed them. He had killed at least one man in fair fight, when it was his life or the other's. But because in those days his pulse was strong and his heart was young, the matter had never preyed upon him. He had been able to go proudly on his way, strong in his

strength, sure of himself, serene and unafraid. He was, in those days, a man.

But this was different; this was the parting of the ways. Noll had spent his great strength too swiftly. His muscles were as stout as ever, but his heart was not. Drink was gnawing at him; old age was gnawing at him.

At times, when he felt this failing of his own strong heart, he blamed Faith for it, and fretted at her because she dragged him down. At other times he was ashamed, he was afraid of the eyes of the men; he fled to her for comfort and for strength. He was a prey, too, to regretful memories. The matter of Mauger, for instance. He was, for all he fought the feeling, tortured by remorse for what he had done to Mauger.

And he was dreadfully afraid of the one-eyed man.

At first he half enjoyed this fear; it was a new sensation, and he rolled in it like a horse in clover. But as the weeks passed, it nagged at him so constantly that he became obsessed with it. He was pursued by the chuckling, mirthless mirth of the one-eyed man. He thought Mauger was like a scavenger-bird that waits for a sick beast to die. Mauger harassed him.

This change in Noll Wing reacted upon Faith. Because her life was so close to his, she was forced to witness the manifestations which he hid from the men; because her eyes were the eyes of a woman who loves, she saw things which the men did not see. She saw the slow loosening of the muscles of Noll's jaw; saw how his cheeks came to sag like jowls. She saw the old, proud strength in his eyes weaken and fail; she saw his eyes grow red and furtive; saw, too, how his whole body became overcast with a thickening, flabby garment of fat, like a net that bound his slothful limbs.

Noll's slow disintegration of soul had its effect upon Faith. She had been, when she came to the Sally Sims with him, little more than a girl; she had been gay and laughing, but she had also been calm and strong. As the weeks passed, Faith became less gay; her laugh rang more seldom. But by the same token, the strength that dwelt in her seemed to increase. While Noll weakened, she grew strong.

There were days when she was very lonely; she felt that the Noll she had married was gone from her. She was, for all her strength, a woman; and a woman is always happiest when she can lean on other

strength and find comfort there. But Noll—Noll, by this, was not so strong of soul as she.

She was lonely with another loneliness; with the loneliness of a mother. But Noll had told her brutally, in the beginning, that there was no place for a baby upon the Sally Sims. He overbore her, because in such a matter she could not command him. The longing was too deep in her for words. She could not lay it bare for even Noll to see.

Thus, in short, Faith was unhappy. Unhappy; yet she loved Noll, and her heart clung to him and yearned to strengthen and support the man, yearned to bring back the valor she had loved in him. There could never be, so long as he should live, any man but Noll for her.

Dan'l Tobey—poor Dan'l, if you will—could not understand this. Dan'l, for all his round and simple countenance, and the engaging frankness of his freckles and his hair, had an eye that could see into the heart of a man; but he knew much less about a woman.

Dan'l was wise; he was also crafty. He contrived, again and again, that Noll should act unworthily in Faith's eyes. To this extent he understood Faith; he understood her ideals, knew that she judged men by them, knew that when Noll fell short of these ideals Faith must in her heart condemn him. And he took care that Noll should fall short.

Dan'l loved Faith with a passion that gripped him, soul and body; yet it was not an unholy thing. When he saw her unhappy, he wished to guard her; when he saw that she was lonely, he wished to comfort her; when he came upon her, once, at the stern, and saw that she had tears in her eyes, it called for all his strength to refrain from taking her in his arms and soothing her. He loved her, but there was nothing in his love that could have soiled her. Dan'l was, in some fashion, a figure of tragedy.

His heart burst from him one day when they had been two weeks in the South Pacific. It was a hard, bitter day—one of those days when the sea is unfriendly, when she torments a ship with thrusting billows, when she racks planks and strains rigging, when she is perverse without being dangerous. There was none of the joy of battle in enduring such a sea; there was only irksome toil.

It told on Noll Wing. His temper worked under the strain. He was on deck through the afternoon; and the climax came when Willis Cox's boat parted the lines that held its bow, and fell and dangled by the stern lines, slatting against the rail of the Sally and spilling the gear into the sea. With every lurch of the sea the boat was splintering; and before the men, driven by Dan'l and Willis, could get it inboard again, it was as badly smashed as if a whale's flukes had caught it square. Noll had raged while the men toiled; when the boat was stowed, he strode toward Willis Cox and spun the man around by a shoulder grip.

"Your fault, you damned, careless skunk!" he accused. "You're no more fit for your job. You're a—"

Willis Cox was little more than a boy; he had a boy's sense of justice. He was heart-broken by the accident, and he said soberly:

"I'm sorry, sir. It was my fault. You're right, sir."

"Right?" Noll roared. "Of course I'm right. Do I need a shirking fourth mate to tell me when I'm right or wrong? By—"

His wrath overflowed in a blow; and for all the fact that Noll was aging, his fist was stout. The blow dropped Willis like the stroke of an ax. Noll himself filled a bucket and sluiced the man, and drove him below with curses.

Afterward the reaction sent Noll to Faith in a rage at himself, at the men, at the world, at her. Dan'l, in the main cabin, heard Noll swearing at her. And he set his teeth and went on deck, for fear of the thing he might do. He was still there, half an hour later, when Faith came quietly up the companion. Night had fallen by then; the sea was moderating. Faith passed him, where he stood by the galley; and he saw her figure silhouetted against the gray gloom of the after-rail. For a

moment he watched her, gripping himself. He saw her shoulders stir as though she wept.

The man could not endure it. He was at her side in three strides. She faced him; and he could see her eyes dark in the night as she looked at him. He stammered:

"Faith! Faith! I'm so sorry—"

She did not speak, because she could not trust her voice. She was furiously ashamed of her own weakness, of the disloyalty of her thoughts of Noll. She swallowed hard.

"He's a dog, Faith," Dan'l whispered. "Ah, Faith—I love you. I love you. I could kill him, I love you so."

Faith knew she must speak. She said quietly:

"Dan'l—that is not—"

He caught her hand with an eloquent grace that was strange to see in the awkward, freckled man. He caught her hand to his lips and kissed it.

"I love you, Faith!" he cried.

She freed her hand, rubbed at it where his lips had pressed it. Dan'l was scarce breathing at all. He was fearful of what he had done, fearful of what she might do or say.

"Dan'l, my friend, I love Noll Wing with all my heart," she said simply.

And poor Dan'l knew, for all she spoke so simply, that there was no part of her which was his. And he backed away from her a little, humbly, until his figure was shadowed by the deck-house. And then he turned and went forward to the waist, and left Faith standing there.

He found Mauger in the waist, and jeered at him good-naturedly until he was himself again.

Faith, after a little, went below.

Noll was asleep in his bunk above hers. He lay on his back, one bare and hairy arm hanging over the side of the bunk. He was snoring, and there was the pungent smell of rum about him.

(To be continued in the April number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

THE GOLD GOWN

I WAITED for a rime all afternoon,
But it came not. Then walked I in the town,
And met a blue-eyed girl in a gold gown;
Yet still I had no rime—but her instead,
Living, though beautiful as she were dead,
And inaccessible as is the moon.

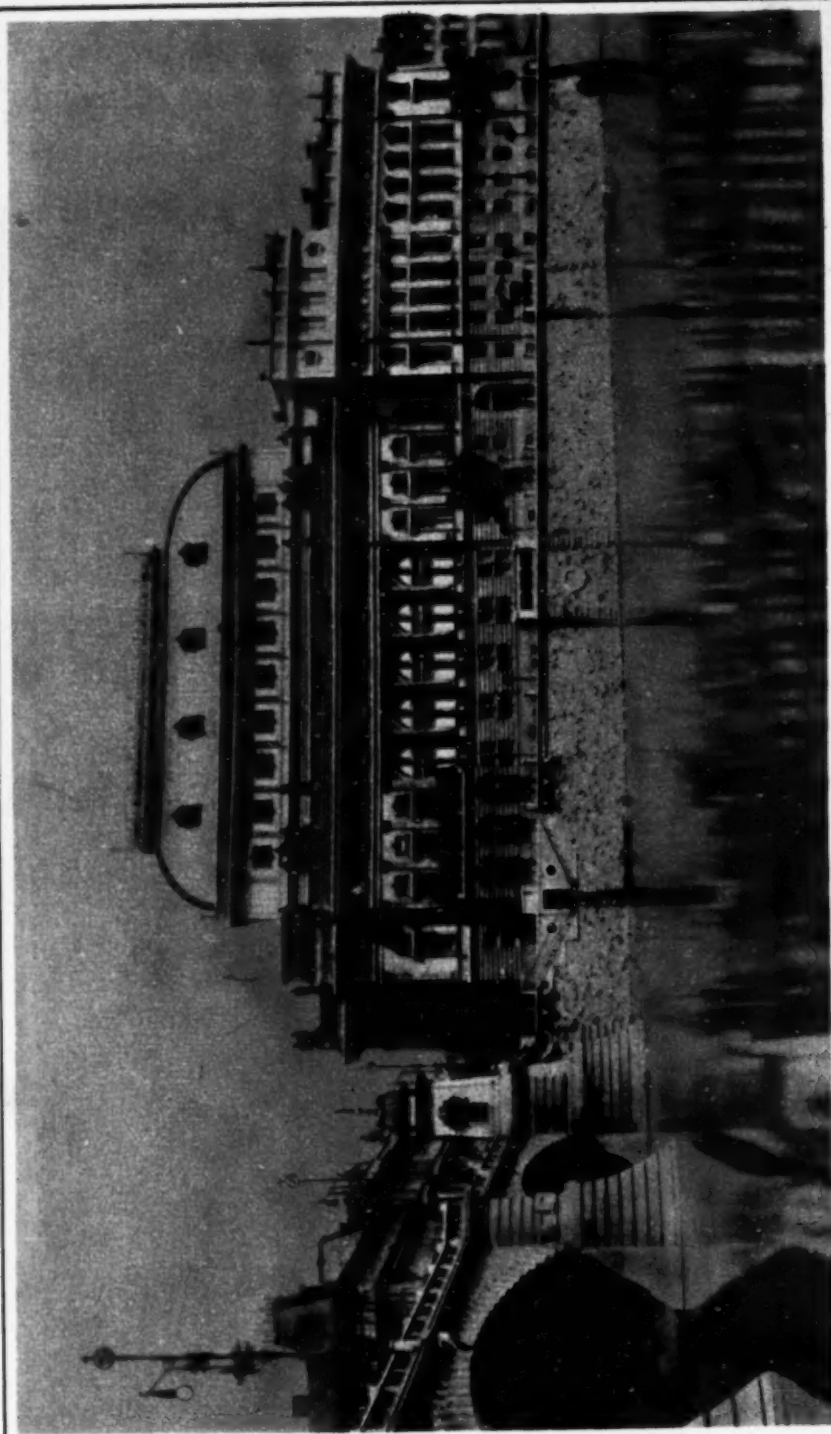
Richard Le Gallienne

The Old Capital of a New State



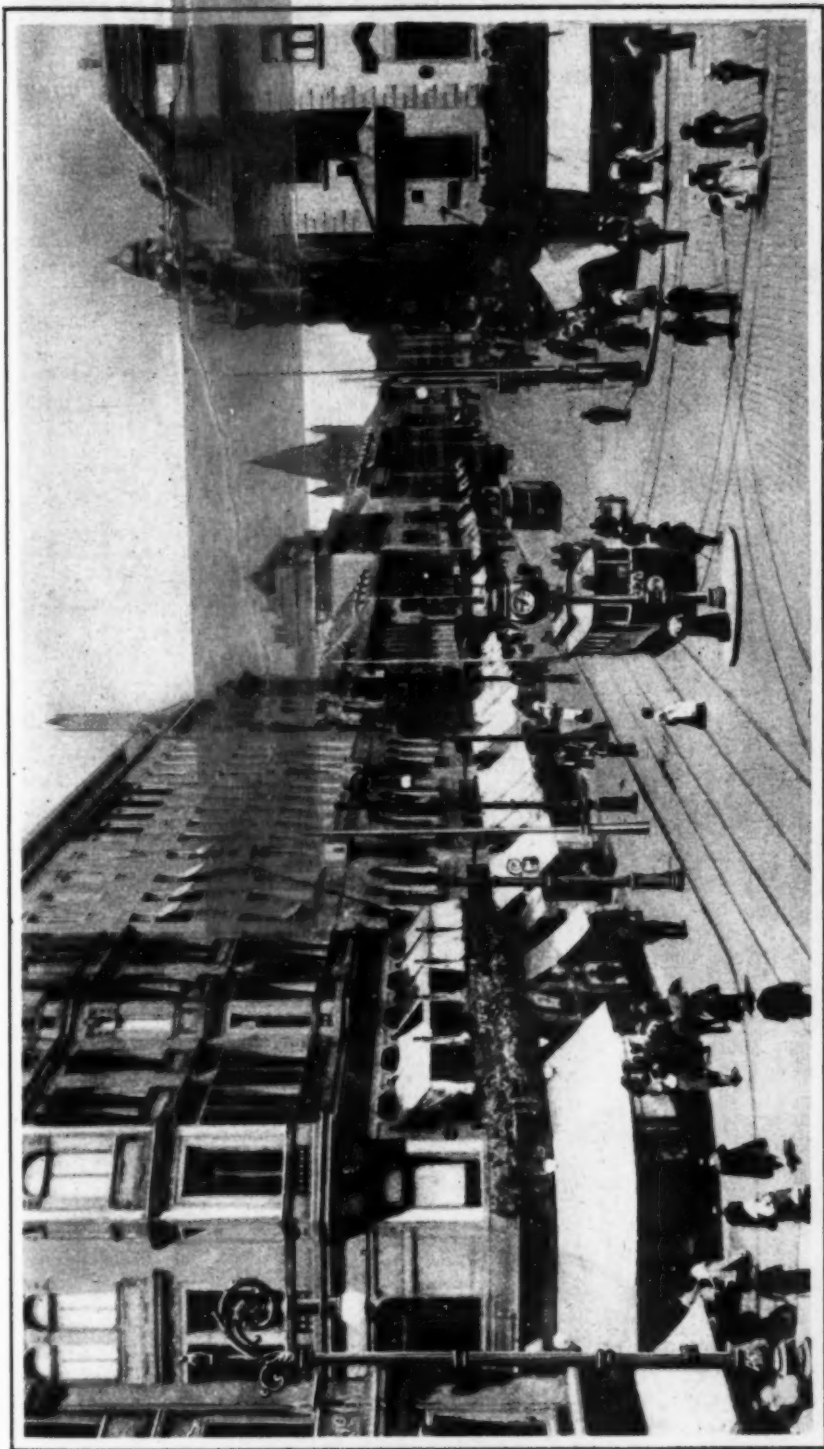
PRAGUE, THE CAPITAL OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

On the left is the Old Town Bridge Tower, built in the fourteenth century—In the distance, beyond the river Moldau, are the Hradšchin, or Castle, and the spires of the cathedral



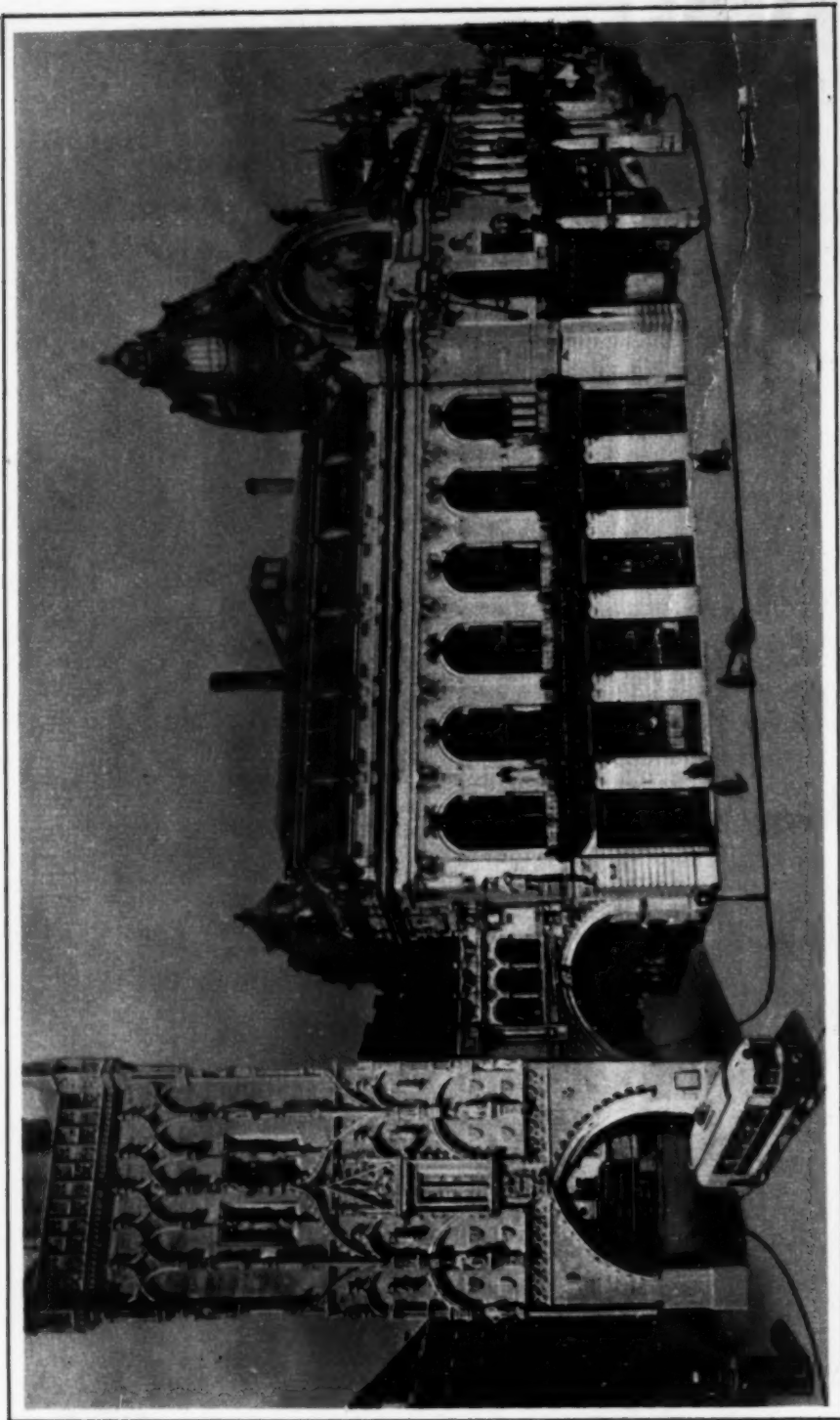
THE BOHEMIAN NATIONAL THEATER, PRAGUE

This is a modern building dedicated to the national drama of the Czechs—On the left is the Kaiser Franz bridge, the name of which may perhaps have been changed since Bohemia threw off the imperial yoke of Austria



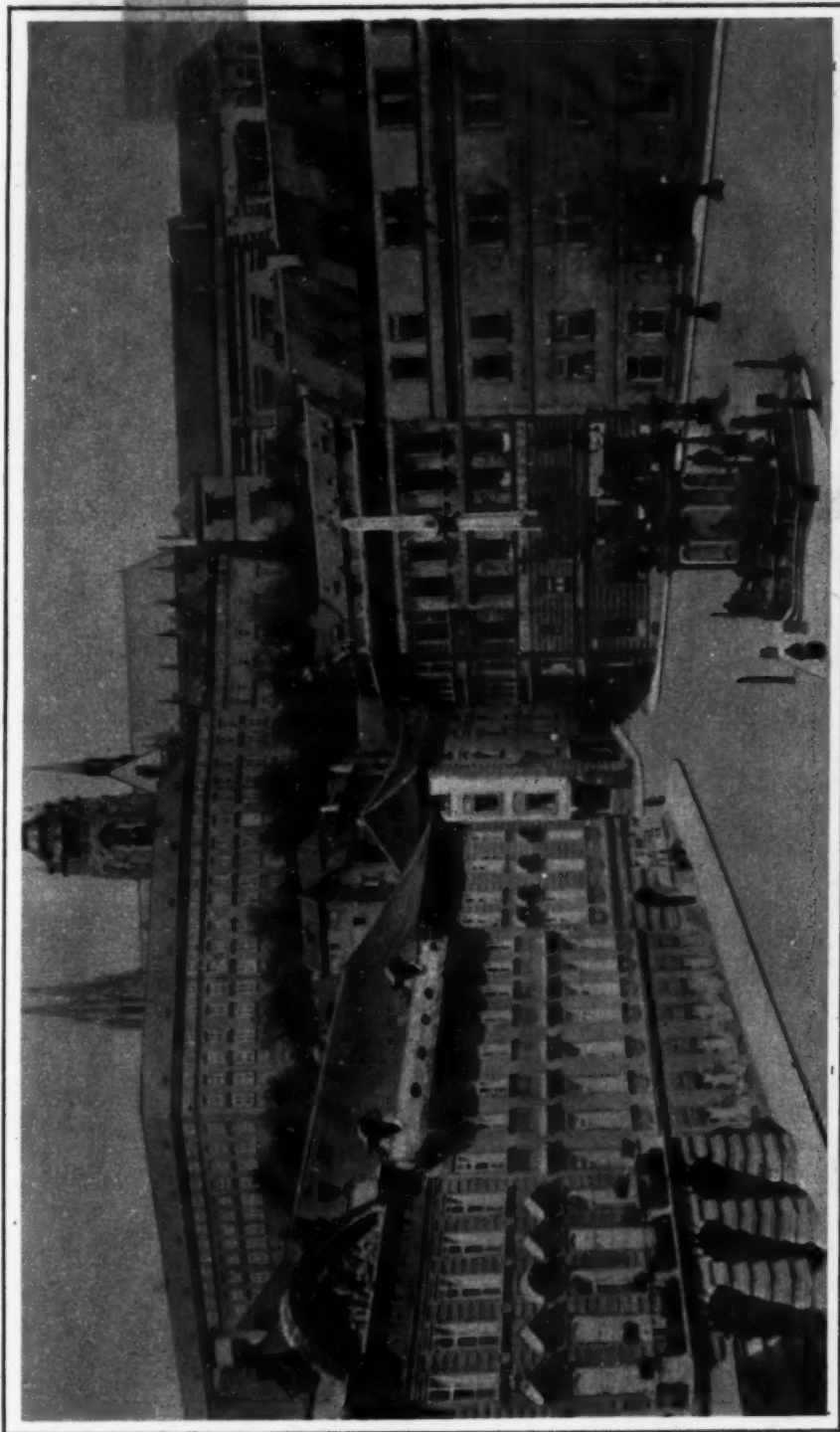
THE GRABEN, THE CHIEF SHOPPING STREET IN PRAGUE

The Graben, or Na Příkopě, was formerly part of the moat around the old walled town of Prague—The walls, disappeared long ago, and the city has greatly expanded in modern times



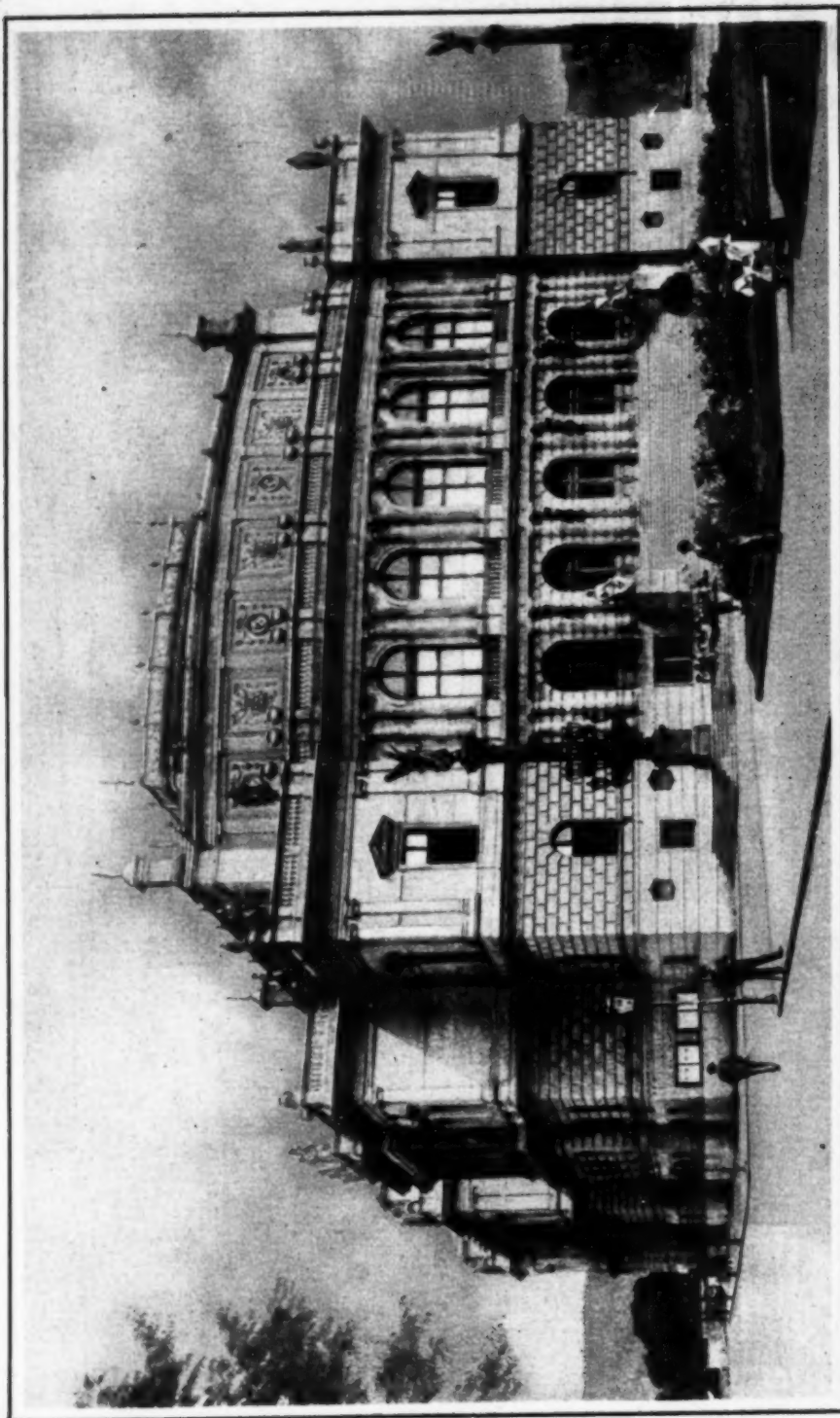
PRAGUE—THE POWDER TOWER AND CITY COUNCIL HALL

The Powder Tower, or Prasná Brána, was one of the gate towers of the old city walls—Built in 1475, it was restored in 1883



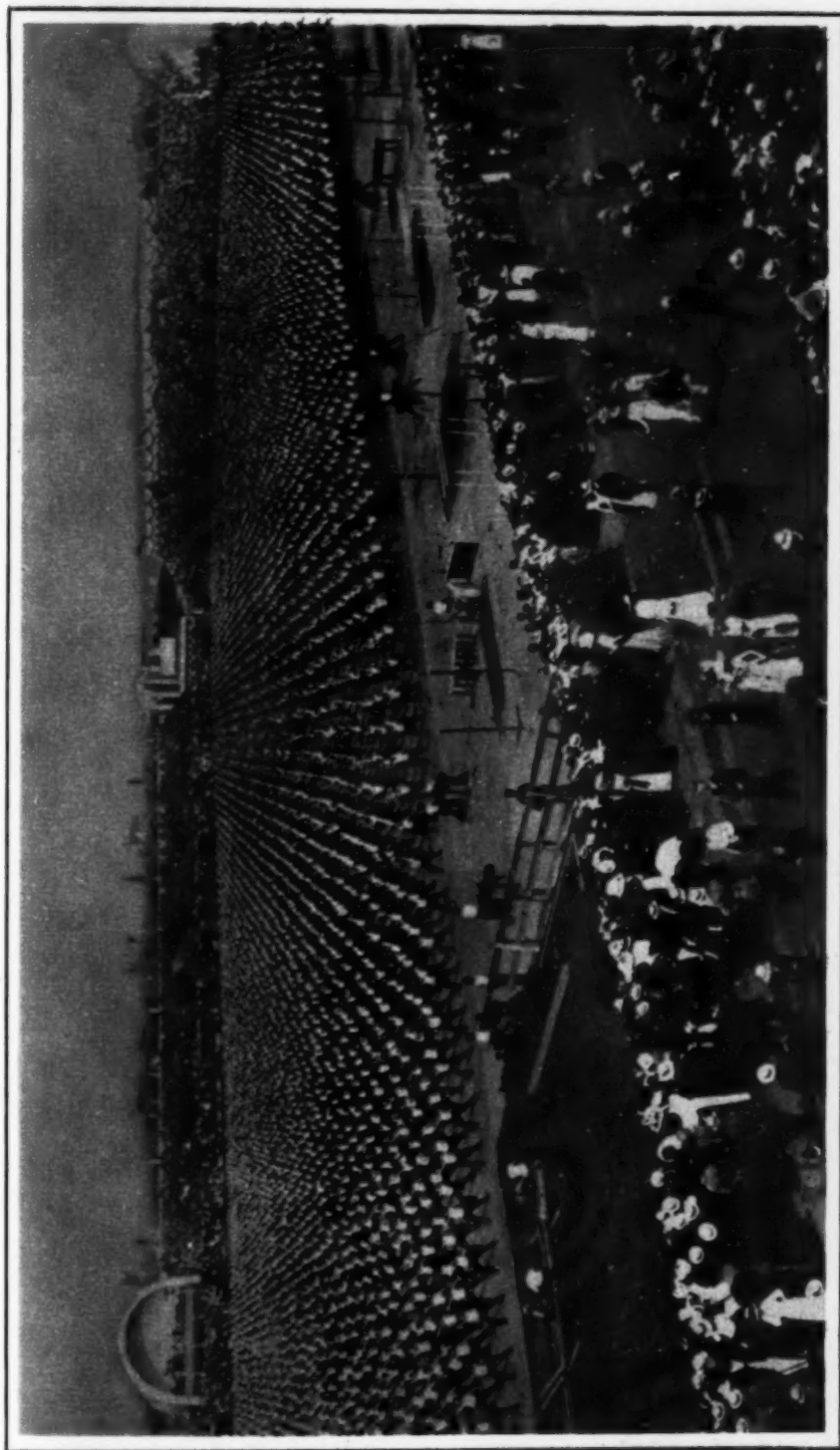
PRAGUE—THE CASTLE AND ST. VITUS'S CATHEDRAL

The Hradschin, or Castle, built on a hill overlooking Prague, includes the Hofburg, which was the residence of the medieval kings of Bohemia, and several adjoining buildings.—The cathedral stands in a square within it



THE RUDOLPHINUM, ONE OF PRAGUE'S FINE MODERN BUILDINGS

Built in 1884, the Rudolphinum contains a large collection of paintings, galleries for art exhibitions, a conservatory of music, and two concert-halls



A MEETING OF THE SOKOLE, OR BOHEMIAN ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Ostensibly devoted solely to gymnastic exercises, the Sokole was really a patriotic association of young Bohemians, preparing them to fight for liberty.—This picture shows a field-day for eleven thousand members in the outskirts of Prague



PRAGUE—WENCESLAUS SQUARE AND THE BOHEMIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM
Vaclavske Namesti, or Wenceslaus Square, is one of the chief open spaces in Prague—The Bohemian National Museum is a handsome modern building, erected 1885-1890

The War Against Illiteracy

THE FIVE MILLION ILLITERATES IN THE UNITED STATES ARE AN ELEMENT OF WEAKNESS AND DANGER TO OUR COUNTRY, AND SUCH A CONDITION SHOULD NO LONGER BE TOLERATED

By Philander P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education

FOR us as a people, now that we have won the war for freedom and democracy, there is another task of vital and supreme importance. That task is to fit ourselves and our children for life and citizenship in the new world which peace is bringing in.

All the issues of the future depend upon the accomplishment of this task, and all other tasks, for the present, are of only secondary importance. Others may be postponed; this cannot. For its accomplishment we must bend all our energies, pay the full price, and make whatever sacrifices may be necessary.

Without permanent loss or injury we may practise stringent economy in food, clothing, and fuel; we may deprive ourselves of many luxuries which have come to be regarded as necessities of life; we may refrain from unnecessary travel; we may dispense with desirable personal service; we may postpone new business enterprises; we may temporarily suspend many activities not immediately essential to the health and happiness of the nation. But things necessary for the support of our schools and other agencies of education we may not withhold except at the peril of permanent loss and irreparable injury.

Never before has the importance of maintaining our schools at their highest possible efficiency, and of giving to every one the best possible opportunity for education, been so apparent. Both for the future welfare of our country and for the individual benefit of the children, we must see that the standards of work are the highest possible and the attendance the largest possible. When the boys and girls now of school age reach manhood and womanhood, there will be need for a higher level of in-

telligence, skill, and wisdom for the work of life and for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship than we have ever yet attained.

During the period of reconstruction after the world war there will be such demands upon this country for men and women of scientific knowledge, technical skill, and general culture as have never before come to any nation. The world must be rebuilt, and the United States will have an opportunity to play a far more important part than it has ever played before in agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce, and also in the things of cultural life—art, literature, music, scientific discovery.

THE DEMAND FOR TRAINED LEADERS

England, France, Italy, and the Teutonic nations have thrown into battle a very large percentage of their trained men, including most of the young professors and instructors in their colleges and schools. For four years their universities have been almost empty. The young men who under normal conditions would have received the education necessary to prepare them for leadership in the future development of their people have fought in the trenches, and many have died or have been mutilated.

All these countries must needs go through a long period of reconstruction, industrially and in many other respects. They will ask of us steel, engines, and cars for railroads, agricultural implements, and machinery for industrial plants. They will also ask for men to install these and to direct much of their development in every line. In this useful work for civilization our trained men and women should be able and ready to render every possible assistance.

It should be remembered that the number of students in our universities, colleges, normal schools, and technical schools is very small as compared with the total number of persons of producing age—little more than one-half of one per cent. Most of these students are young men and women who are becoming more mature and fit for service. On the other hand, of the sixty million men and women of producing age, the older ones are growing more unfit and passing beyond the age of service. It should also be remembered that it will be some time before the more mature young men who went into the army will be able to return to their normal pursuits.

Americanization is another educational movement of prime importance at the present time. We should give the people who come to our shores ample opportunity to learn the English language, the common language of communication in this country, and we should do all we can to induce them to take advantage of the opportunities offered. We should try to teach them something of the country to which they have come.

For hundreds of thousands of them, today, there is nothing beyond the Palisades of the Hudson. Those who settle in the great cities of the East know nothing of the wheat-fields of the West, the cotton-fields of the South, the fruit-growing sections of the Far West. They know nothing of our mountains and valleys, our hills and plains, our fields and forests, our rivers and waterfalls. We should teach them something of the history of the country, something of its marvelous growth and development, something of the principles for which Americans have been willing to fight and to die whenever it has been necessary.

Only thus may we expect them to gain an understanding of our country and of its ideals. Americanization means an entering into the spirit of the country.

THE HIGH COST OF ILLITERACY

The crisis through which we have passed has called our attention to the weaknesses and dangers that spring from our neglect of the education of our own people and the proper instruction of those who come to us from abroad. The Secretary of Agriculture is sending out large numbers of bulletins, urging farmers to produce more food, and telling them how to do so; but two and a

half million farmers cannot read a word of them, and nearly twice as many read with such difficulty that they make little or no use of them.

We have drafted into the army tens of thousands of men who cannot understand a word of the commands, and others who cannot read any order, direction, or sign, or make any memorandum of anything which they are told or which they see. Until the selective draft went into effect such men were not accepted as recruits, for the reason that it requires much time to drill and train them, and for the further reason that most of them cannot be made into good and intelligent soldiers. The first draft brought more than forty thousand of them, and in every cantonment one hears the same story of the difficulty of training them, of their inefficiency, and of attempts to shift them from one command to another.

Dr. John H. Finley, president of the University of the State of New York, presented this picture of what he found in one of the cantonments:

How practical is the need of a language in this country, common to all tongues, is illustrated by what I saw in one of the great cantonments a few nights ago. In the mess-hall, where I had sat an hour before with a company of the men of the National Army, a few small groups were gathered along the tables learning English under the tuition of some of their comrades, one of whom had been a district supervisor in a neighboring State and another a theological student. In one of these groups one of the exercises for the evening consisted in practising the challenge when on sentry duty. Each pupil of the group—there were four of Italian and two of Slavic birth—shouldered in turn the long-handled stove-shovel and aimed it at the teacher, who ran along the side of the room as if to evade the guard. The pupil called out in broken speech:

"Halt, who goes there?"

The answer came from the teacher:

"Friend!"

And then, in as yet unintelligible English—the voices of innumerable ancestors struggling in their throats to pronounce it—the words:

"Advance and give the countersign!"

So are those of confused tongues learning to speak the language of the land they have been summoned to defend. What a commentary upon our educational shortcomings that in the days of peace we had not taught these men, who have been here long enough to be citizens, and tens of thousands of their brothers with them, to know the language in which our history and laws are written, and in which the commands of defense must now be given!

Americanization can come only through teaching. We must win the mind and heart of the people for the country, and for its

institutions and ideals. This cannot be accomplished by force or compulsion. Americanism can never be obtained through processes of Prussianism. The ways of liberty and democracy are not the ways of militaristic autocracy.

The prayer of the negro preacher, "Oh, Lord, come down with a sledge-hammer in each hand and beat 'ligion into these niggers' souls!" can never be answered. The spirit of freedom and of love for the institutions of democracy—the love that will lead a man to die for them—cannot be created by force. It must be fostered by sympathy, friendly assistance, and intelligent leadership. Force, compulsion, and restraint may be necessary for immediate protection against disloyalty, and, when necessary, they must be used, but they are effective only for temporary restraint. They have little value for the promotion of permanent good citizenship, and still less in giving an understanding of our reasons for going into the world war and of the principles for which we fought.

It behooves us, therefore, to do everything possible to unite our people in spirit, in understanding, and in effort. If we do this work well, we shall be stronger for the tasks of war and also for the tasks of peace. We shall have here in America a great democratic people of more than one hundred millions capable of playing their part well in the front rank of the free nations of the earth. We shall be better able to show the world the real meaning of democracy, and to illustrate its worth.

THE WORK OF THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION

The last census showed more than thirteen million foreign-born persons in the United States, and more than thirty-two millions of foreign birth or parentage. It is estimated that five millions of the foreign-born habitually use one or other of more than a hundred foreign languages or dialects. The presence of this number of aliens and quasi-aliens presents many problems, with which the United States Bureau of Education has undertaken to deal. In order to make English the language of this nation, it has framed the following program of work:

A nation-wide campaign of publicity to insure the attendance of immigrants at night-schools and the interest of Americans in the project.

Publication and distribution of schedules

of operation for agencies cooperating, and bulletins for school authorities.

Publication and distribution of an educational guide for immigrants.

Distribution of the names of incoming immigrants who are unable to speak English to the various school authorities.

Publication and distribution of leaflets in foreign languages.

Publication of editorials in foreign languages in the foreign press.

Translation and printing of important speeches on national subjects, and of laws and regulations relating to aliens.

Utilization of foreign-born speakers to address aliens in their own languages.

Correlation of all agencies upon the basis of one Federal program of Americanization, especially through education.

Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, recently sent letters to members of Congress showing just what the situation is, and asking for remedial legislation. He says:

The war has brought facts to our attention that are almost unbelievable, and that are in themselves accusatory. I believe that the time has come when we should give serious consideration to the education of those who cannot read or write in the United States.

In 1910, when the last census was taken, there were in this country 5,516,163 persons over ten years of age who were unable to read or write in any language. More than fifty-eight per cent of these were white persons, and of these 1,534,272 were native-born whites. Although statistics are yet incomplete, it is said that there are more than 1,500,000 men between the draft ages of eighteen and thirty-six—questionnaires to those between thirty-six and forty-five have not been sent out, or have been recalled—who cannot read or write in English or in any other language. If these 5,516,163 illiterates were stretched in a double line of march at intervals of three feet, and were to march past the White House at the rate of twenty-five miles a day, it would require more than two months for them to pass.

We should, moreover, consider the economic loss arising out of this condition. If the labor value of an illiterate is less by only fifty cents a day than that of an educated man or woman, the country is losing \$825,000,000 a year through illiteracy. This estimate is no doubt below rather than above the real loss.

It is not pleasant to think of these millions of people who cannot read a bulletin on agriculture, a farm paper, a food-pledge card, a Liberty-loan appeal, a newspaper, the Constitution of the United States, or their Bibles, and who do not know how to keep personal or business accounts.

A NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN TO BE WAGED

All should work together in the campaign to extirpate illiteracy and to advance our standards of public education. Parents should make all possible efforts to keep their children at school, and should have public or private help when they cannot do so without it. The attendance in the high schools should be increased, and more boys and girls should be induced to remain until their course is completed. For all boys and girls who cannot attend the day sessions of the high schools, continuation classes should be formed, to meet at such times as may be arranged during working hours or in the evening.

All cities should maintain evening schools for adult men and women. In cities having considerable numbers of immigrants, evening schools should be maintained for them, with classes in English, civics, and such other subjects as will be helpful to these foreigners in understanding our industrial, social, and political life. For instruction in trades and industries and for continuation schools, the funds provided by the Federal vocational education law, the so-called Smith-Hughes Act, may be used.

In few States is the supply of broadly educated and well-trained teachers equal to the demand. In most States the normal schools do not yet prepare half enough teachers to fill the vacancies. The need for better schools to meet the new demands for a higher level of average intelligence, scientific knowledge, and industrial skill, which will come with the reestablishment of peace,

makes more urgent than ever the need for more and better-trained teachers.

All institutions of higher learning should reduce the cost of living and all other expenses to the lowest practicable figure, so that as few students as possible may be excluded because of the cost of attendance. Societies and individuals should lend to worthy students at low rates of interest, and on as long terms as may be necessary, funds needed to keep them in college until graduation. This is especially true of young men who have been in the army at low pay, and who find it difficult to finance a university course.

In agricultural colleges special intensive courses should be given to prepare teachers, directors, and supervisors of agriculture and practical farm superintendents. It should be remembered that the scientific knowledge and directing skill of these men, and their ability to increase the productive capacity of thousands of less highly trained men, are far more valuable than the work they could do as farm-hands. The total number of agricultural students in all our colleges is only a fraction more than one-tenth of one per cent of the total number of persons engaged in agriculture, or about thirteen in ten thousand—not enough to affect the agricultural production of the country materially by their labor, but enough to affect it immensely by their directive power when their college courses have been finished.

Every educational agency should redouble its energies and concentrate them on those things that will prepare its students to render the most effective service to the country and to the world now that the great war is over. Effective service is what counts. Every American school officer, every American teacher, and every American student should ever keep in mind this goal of effective service.

THE STARS OF EVENING

OFF when, a dream-eyed child, I saw dusk slain,
I wondered at each pearly light
As it was added to the twinkling chain
Around the neck of night.

But love has come and whispered to me why,
After all these unanswered years;
Immortal lovers kiss behind the sky
Each time a star appears!

Oscar C. Williams

The Sun-Seeker

BY G. RANGER WORMSER

Illustrated by J. Scott Williams

SHE came into the room very quietly. She stood in the doorway, looking down the sunlight-flooded spread of the carpet; glancing at the chints-covered chairs, at the long line of the book-crowded walls. She was dimly conscious of the highly polished bulk of her piano in one corner, with the bowl of peonies on it. Her eyes raised themselves to the mullioned windows set in the four sides of the room. The clean-cut steel of them gleamed in the sun that poured through their old, uneven glass.

She stood staring at the man sitting in the window-seat, his book lying face downward on his knee, his eyes fixed in the dazzling blaze of sunshine. He did not know that she stood there until she spoke.

"Jerry!"

His head turned slowly. His eyes, blue and set far apart, met her eyes.

"I didn't know you had come back," he told her. "I thought you'd gone down to the village. I never even heard the car drive up."

She took a step into the room. She closed the door behind her. She crossed the sunlight-filled space and stood in front of him.

"I wasn't down in the village," she said slowly. "I started for the village. I sent the motor off at the bottom of the hill. I met Hartley. Hartley and I walked home together."

"Is he outside now?" the man asked quickly. "Is Hartley outside?"

For an instant she hesitated.

He noted her hesitation. He smiled—a smile that came gradually to his clean-cut lips and quivered from them as it touched them.

"He wouldn't come in," she said. "He went back to his own place. He doesn't think you like him, Jerry. He almost told me as much this morning."

The man's long, white fingers spread themselves over the cover of the book. The brilliant blue of the cover was spotted with shaking golden specks of sunlight. The tips of his sensitive fingers lingered and vibrated in the warmth of the specks.

"I don't like Hartley, and I don't quite see why you should like Hartley, Marian. He isn't the kind of a person one could like—really like, you know. He isn't your sort, dear. In your heart I don't think you do like him. Come, now, Marian, you don't, do you?"

Looking up, he saw that her lower lip, full and very red, jerked.

"I do," she said. "I tell you, Jerry, I do like Hartley!"

He sat up straight.

"Why?"

"Oh, I don't know! I'm sure I couldn't tell you why, exactly. Why does any one ever like any one else? He likes me and I like him. I guess that's about all there's to it."

"He's—he's rather careful of not showing he likes you, isn't he, Marian? Rather too careful, I should say."

He saw her mouth pouting.

"I don't know what you mean."

"Won't you try a bit, old girl, to see what I mean?"

"Jerry, sometimes you're positively aggravating!"

"Sorry, Marian!"

"Jerry, it's really too bad of you!"

"What, Marian?"

"Feeling as you do about Hartley. When I tell you I like him, there's nothing beyond that. You might know me well enough to know there wouldn't be. You aren't jealous, are you?"

"Of course not! I simply don't like him," he insisted good-humoredly. "I've no use for that kind of a man. In your heart—"



THE THING GREW IN SOUND. THE RISING CRESCENDO OF IT FILLED THE ROOM—

"But he's such a wonderful help to me, Jerry!" she interrupted. "You'll have to admit yourself, Jerry, that he's a remarkable musician."

"And that's why you like him, Marian?"

"Oh, I don't know!"

She sat down on the window-seat. The sunlight streamed hotly over her and around her, and spilled itself in an intensity of yellowed warmth. She reached up a hand to draw down the Venetian blind.

"Don't!" he said.



—SHE WATCHED HIM, FASCINATED—HIS HALF-CLOSED EYES, HIS FACE GROWN WHITE

"How can you stand the glare?" she asked.

"There's no glare, old girl. It's warm and golden and dancing, and marvelously, brilliantly cleansing. It just reaches into the center of your being—the yellow glow

of it. I could sit here for hours, soaking and drenching myself with the feel of it."

"You're lazy, Jerry. You're like a cat, sitting in the sun, lapping it up, blinking with content!"

He grinned.

"Ever see me blink, Marian?"

She leaned forward, peering into his wide blue eyes with their thin-cut, short-lashed lids. They met hers with a strong, steady gaze.

She had often wondered about Jerry's eyes. She had thought once or twice that there was something tremendously golden and glowing that showed itself through them.

"No," she said earnestly. "I'll have to take that back, Jerry. I don't see how you do it, though!"

She twisted her head so that she faced the sun.

"You'd better be careful," he cautioned her.

Her hands went up to her eyes.

"Heavens! It's blinding!"

He laughed. His eyes fixed themselves in the hot, dazzling sun, and for a full moment he kept them there.

When he looked at her, she turned suddenly from him. His gaze felt bright and burning. She thought there was a strange intensity behind his eyes.

"I asked Hartley to come for luncheon," she admitted uncertainly.

"But you said he wouldn't come?"

"Yes."

"Then why bother with Hartley?"

"I'm not bothering, only he's coming over afterward, Jerry—right after luncheon—to play for me."

"So that's it!"

He picked up the book in his sensitive, beautiful hands, looked down at the number of the page, and then closed it.

"I thought you wouldn't mind. You'll be taking your walk directly we're through with lunch, won't you?"

"You want this room, eh?"

"You made me bring my piano out here from the house."

"I didn't do that for Hartley!" he said very softly.

"I didn't say you did."

"This room is just for you and me, Marian—and for the sun. I don't quite see how I'm going to make you understand it. I thought you might know. You've got to realize that Hartley—well, he isn't the kind of person to bring in here. It wouldn't be safe!"

"I don't know what in the world you're talking about," she said; "and I'll wager you don't know yourself!"

"I'm only trying to tell you, Marian. I

had this room built for—oh, why can't you let Hartley stay in the rest of the house? He doesn't belong in here. I don't care what you do with him, but you ought to keep him out of this room."

"You're mighty careful of your precious room!"

"I don't have to be careful," he said slowly. "It can take care of itself, this room can. The sun can take care of it!"

She wondered what he meant by that, but she could not quite bring herself to ask him. She did not want to launch him on one of his lengthy harangues about the sun. She was sick and tired of hearing about its beauty and its cleanliness and its purifying power.

In her heart she could not understand Jerry's worship of the sun. She did not want to think of it as Jerry did, as something that could actually force itself as a dominant being into their lives. She had not encouraged him to have this room—a sun-room—built off from the main house; but now that it was built, she could not for the life of her see why she should not enjoy the quiet of it as much as Jerry.

She knew that to Jerry the room, with its many wide windows, was something like a temple. She had never pretended to like it. She had tried to dissuade him from having it built. She had found fault with everything about it.

Particularly she had criticised the great mullioned windows with their thick panes of old, uneven glass. She disliked those windows furiously. They radiated the sun so glisteningly; they multiplied its brilliancy; they were always so completely and blazingly filled with its glory. To her it seemed that they caught at, and held, and potentially magnified, the sun itself.

When she had told Jerry that she hated those windows, he had laughed at her. He had overruled all her objections, saying that it was his own room. Of course, he had said it nicely. She thought of that now with rising resentment.

"I'll have Jennings move my piano back into the house to-morrow."

"No, Marian. I like to have you play here for me. You needn't have your piano moved."

"Well, then, what *shall* I do?"

"You can tell Hartley that you don't want him here."

She got to her feet.

"I'll not do that!"

"You can tell him when he comes this afternoon."

His eyes were on her. She went to the door.

"Are you coming?" Her voice was low. "Luncheon must be ready."

He put his book down on the center-table. He went out of the door after her, and followed her through the garden and into the house.

II

THEY ate their meal in silence. They hurried with their food, and when they raised their eyes from their plates they avoided looking directly at each other.

When they had finished, he went out into the hall, got his hat and his stick, and started across the fields. Marian went upstairs to her room.

For a long time she stood looking at herself in the old wooden-framed mirror hanging above her dresser. She took down her hair and coiled it into her neck—the way Hartley had told her he liked to have her wear it. She smiled as she arranged it. The smile stayed on her lips. She thought her mouth looked nice curved in a smile.

She was glad her teeth were white and even. Her eyes were pretty, too. Men had always told her that of her eyes. She stared into her eyes. She made up her mind that she would look at Hartley as she was looking at herself.

She went into her clothes-closet and pulled at the different dresses. Blue—Hartley was fond of blue. She took out the blue dress.

She went over her conversation with Jerry. She could not recall his exact words. She had not time for that. She had always felt that he had no use for Hartley, that he never would have any use for Hartley. He had practically admitted that to her just now. She had borne with Jerry's likes and dislikes, but she told herself that at last she was tired of them.

He had said that he was not jealous of Hartley, and she knew that he had spoken the truth. She knew that it was not possible for Jerry to be jealous of her. His nearest approach to anything like jealousy was his feeling for his room.

She could not understand why Jerry should so object to Hartley. Supposing Hartley did make love to her!

She thought rather carefully of the possibility of Hartley making love to her. She

could take care of herself. She was not afraid of any one; certainly not of Jerry. She determined to take Hartley to the sun-room.

Suddenly she laughed aloud, and rang for her maid.

"Madam looks lovely!" the girl told her.

"It's my hair," Marian murmured.

"I'm tired of the way I always do it."

"Will madam want her hat?"

"No—I'm not going out."

She was conscious of the girl staring after her as she went out of the room and down the stairs. In the lower hall Jennings met her.

"Mr. Hartley, ma'am."

She went past the butler and into the drawing-room. Hartley was standing in the center of the old Persian rug.

"How sweet you look!" he said.

"That is nice of you. I didn't think you'd even notice."

"I couldn't help but notice!"

He had her hand in his. She thought that the grip of his fingers was pleasantly tight.

"We'll go on out into the sun-room, Hartley."

"And where may that be?"

"Just across the garden."

She led the way through the long window and out upon the terrace. They walked side by side through the garden.

"It's pretty here," he said.

She smiled up at him.

"You know you promised to play for me, Hartley?"

"You didn't think I'd forgotten that? You don't think I could ever forget anything I promised you, do you?"

"Why, no. I hope not!"

She pushed open the door of the sun-room.

"Lovely!" he said. "It couldn't be lovelier."

"It's really Jerry's room," she told him, and a touch of harshness came into her voice.

"Jerry—who doesn't like me!"

She laughed.

"Nonsense!" she said.

"Oh, it's not nonsense. I know that, you see."

"Jerry likes every one," she persisted.

"Then I'm the exception that proves the rule."

She avoided looking at him.

"Is it too glaring in here?"

He nodded.

"The light's terrific!"

"You can draw down the blinds if you want, Hartley. Jerry revels in the sunlight. He's only happy in a stream of sunshine. It's almost silly, the way he keeps on talking about the cleansing power of the sun. Jerry's the one who always leaves the blinds up."

"And if Jerry doesn't like it?"

"Jerry's out!" she said triumphantly.

III

HARTLEY pulled down the blinds against the dazzling sunlight; but through the crevices the rays trickled persistently into the room.

In the cool dusk he went to the piano.

"What shall I play?" he asked.

She stood in the center of the room.

"Play anything. Just play!"

He began to play softly. The blending burst of notes rippled to her. It was something she knew. The melody ran on in her head as each phrase came to her ear. He played well.

"Bravo!" she told him, as he stopped.

He sat there looking at her.

"I can't play," he said.

"Oh, Hartley! Why?"

"You mustn't stand there—like—like a stick. How can I play to a stick?"

"I'm not a stick!" she protested.

"Come over here, where I can see you," he insisted.

She pulled a chair near to the piano. He began to play again. She did not know what he was playing. The thing grew in sound. The rising crescendo of it filled the room. It became tumultuous, frantic.

She watched him, fascinated—his half-closed eyes, his face grown white, his rapid-moving hands. Her breath came quickly. She started to rise from her chair. She made an imperceptible movement toward him.

His fingers snapped up from a great resounding chord. The vibration of it thrilled about her. The room was still, and she thought that it had grown very warm.

"That's better," he said, and held out his hand.

She got out of her chair, went to him, and took his hand. He drew her to him.

"Go on playing," she whispered. "It's too—too wonderful!"

"With you near me," he said thickly, "I could play wonderfully!"

She pulled away from him consciously.

"Then play," she murmured.

His hands crashed down upon the keys. She stood there rigidly. The volume of multiplied sound beat over her and through her. Her eyes closed. She had a strange feeling that the room was gradually filling with something tangible and real. The full music gripped her. Its power drew her irresistibly.

Then the loud, frenzied pitch of his playing fell, and his fingers made a subtle, whispering little melody. The phrases of it were repeated again and again. The insidious, tremulous allure of it quivered hauntingly through the scant notes of its insistent appeal.

Her eyes opened, and she stared about the room, dazed.

Screened from the sun, the place seemed strange to her. Something had come into the room—something invisible, but she could feel it. There was a sudden, stifling wave of heat.

Through the drawn blinds crept the persistent trickle of sunlight.

Then her eyes turned and met his eyes.

"Marian!"

She could not understand what was happening in the room. She felt faint. Her knees had grown weak. She held out her hands, trying to steady herself against the piano.

In a second he was at her side. His words rushed to her.

"I can play wonderfully—for you! Always for you, Marian—for you!"

She leaned against him.

"What is it, Hartley?" Her voice had a strange detached note in it. "What has happened?"

"Happened?" he repeated her word gutturally. "I've played for you! I've let you know it—I've made my music tell it to you!"

"Not—not that," she said slowly.

"That's not what I mean."

"But you know it!" His hand was on her shoulder. "You know it! I love you, Marian—and you love me! I could see it as I played. I watched you! It was what I saw that made me play that way. Marian!"

She moved from him.

"This room!" she whispered, and her eyes grew wide and distended as she looked about her. "What has happened to this room?"



"MY HANDS, MARIAN—THEY'D NEVER BE GOOD FOR ANYTHING AGAIN!"

He gave a short laugh.

"There's something here!"

Her voice had a detached, helpless undertone in it.

"What, Marian? What in Heaven's name has come over you?"

She shivered.

"Something—it's hot!"

She thought then that she felt a movement—an invisible movement. It seemed as if something that had lain quiet had begun to stir itself.

Her eyes, unconsciously alert, went to the bowl of peonies that stood on the piano. As she stared at the flowers, their petals suddenly dropped, crinkled and dry.

"Marian!"

The thing—the invisible thing—was slowly, surely swelling. It was expanding into the corners of the room. She felt a torrid oppression. She was suffocating and smothering.

"The blinds!" she shrieked. "Hartley, pull up the blinds!"

He stood there staring at her.

"The blinds!" she cried again.

She watched him go to the windows. She heard him pull up the blinds with a snap. Her eyes raised themselves to the mullioned windows set in the four walls of the room. The clear-cut steel of them gleamed in the sun that poured through their old, uneven glass. There was a dazzling blaze of sunshine.

Hartley was at her side.

"Go!" she whispered. "Go—now!"

"I'll not go," he said. "You don't want me to go!"

"Hartley, if Jerry—"

He interrupted her.

"Jerry isn't here!"

"Hartley, I didn't tell you before. Jerry said—"

"What do I care what Jerry said?"

"Hartley, if Jerry should find out—"

"How could Jerry find out? Are you going to tell him? Am I?"

The sun poured through the mullioned windows, through their old, uneven glass. Its concentrated rays seemed to be striking upon the chair beside the piano. The thin damask of the covering began to smolder. Smoke came slowly from it, drifting upward in a curling blue-gray column; and then a quick, darting, scarlet flame. The chair was burning!

"Hartley!"

"Where is water?"

"Can't you take the chair and throw it out? Can't you, Hartley?"

"My hands, Marian—they'd never be good for anything again!"

"Your hands! What shall we do, Hartley? I can't go near it—I can't! It's here

—it's in the room—it's everywhere! It's—"

Her words choked off into a sob.

"Water, Marian! Where is water?"

"Hartley, there's none here!"

"The garden?"

"Only a tap down at the farther end!"

"The house, then?"

"Hurry, Hartley! Hurry!"

She knew he had gone from the room.

Her eyes were fixed on the flames, which spread and lapped. Her ears were filled with the sharp crackling of the fire.

As she looked, a streak of flame shot high, catching at a curtain and running in a little leaping flare along the edge of it. She screamed.

Another chair caught. The flames were spreading brilliantly, luridly through the room. Marian ran out into the garden, shrieking in terror.

IV

A MAN came slowly across the fields, which were sun-flecked and sun-streaked and bathed in sunlight. The sun poured hotly over him. He had taken off his hat and carried it under his arm. He sauntered leisurely toward the house that lay in the valley.

At the top of the incline he stood stock-still. He had seen smoke coming from the farther end of the garden below him. Then a flame spurted startlingly into the quiet blue of the sky. And now he saw the figure of a woman rush out into the garden.

He turned. He faced the sun. He stood there in the dazzling blaze of golden sunshine. And across his face there surged a great, glad look of knowledge.

WAITING

HER face is like a flower that grows
Beside the gates of home,
Fair as a quiet stream that flows
Where happy children roam.

Her eyes are tender as the light
Of stars where lovers stray—
Unfailing, through the deepest night
They watch to guide his way.

Though far from her his path may go
Through strife and black despair,
Beside the gate her flowers will grow,
And she will wait him there!

Mary Brooks

Turning Weeds Into Sheep

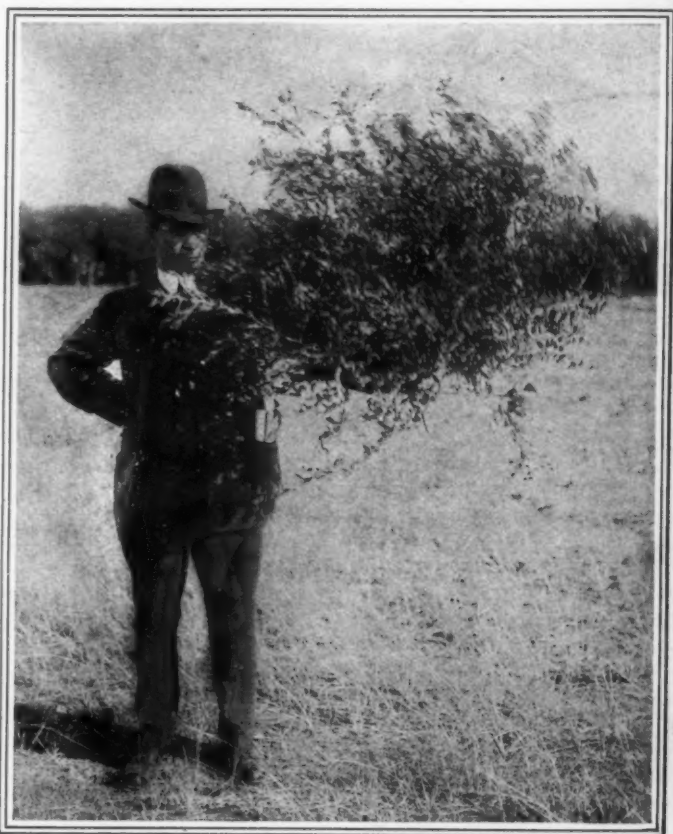
THE INTERESTING EXPERIMENT OF A WASHINGTON STATE RANCHMAN, WHICH MAY
POINT THE WAY TO A MUCH-NEEDED INCREASE IN OUR PRODUCTION
OF WOOL AND OF MUTTON

By Robert H. Moulton

IT has been estimated by the United States Bureau of Animal Industry that it takes one hundred and sixty pounds of wool a year to provide a soldier with uniforms, blankets, and other necessary items, and that it keeps twenty sheep working to supply that quantity, figuring on an average of an eight-pound fleece to each sheep. This makes it easy to understand the emergency that arose when the government called four million men to arms. Our production of wool in 1917 was about three hundred million pounds, and we suddenly found that we needed more than twice as much as that for the army alone, making no allowance for the needs of the civilian population.

The situation, of course, was greatly relieved by the suspension of hostilities, and any immediate fear of a shortage has probably passed. It remains true, however, that the world needs more wool. To do our share in providing it, as well as to increase the nation's food supply, the United States government has urged the necessity of raising more sheep.

The great difficulty to be overcome is the fact that the great areas of grazing-land which formerly existed in the West have been slowly disappearing, and what is still available does not furnish sufficient forage for any great increase in the number of



A TYPICAL SPECIMEN OF THE AUSTRALIAN SALT-BUSH—THE PLANT
BELONGS TO THE GENUS *ATRIPLEX* AND TO THE
CHENOPOD OR GOOSEFOOT FAMILY

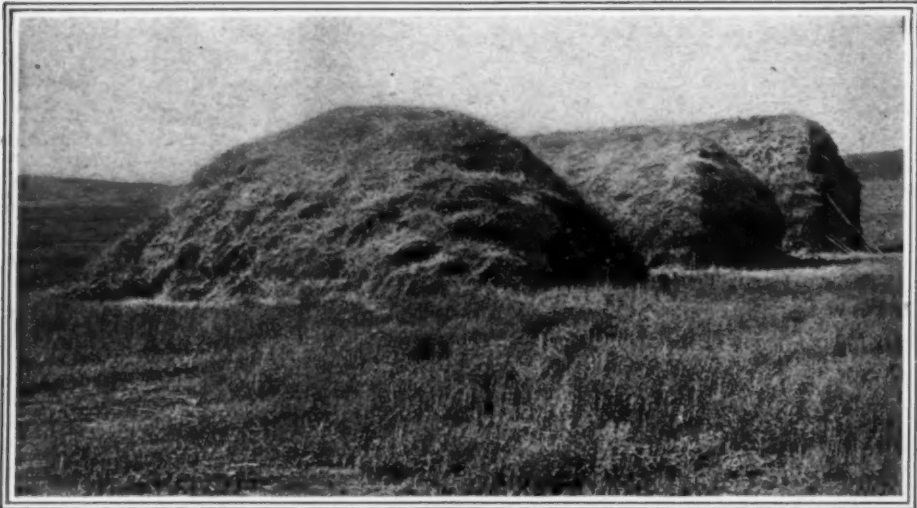
sheep. Such is the situation—or so it seemed up to a year or two ago, when a Washington State sheep-rancher, Y. C. Mansfield, made a discovery which may be destined to play an important part in relieving any future scarcity of wool and mutton. Mr. Mansfield's discovery was simply this—that sheep will wax fat and grow luxuriant fleeces if fed on what is known as the Australian salt-bush.

Now the important thing about this is that there are literally millions of acres of this once-despised weed in some of our Western States, which would furnish grazing-land for enormous flocks of sheep. The land on which the salt-bush grows is now

wheat alone, without keeping live stock to help pay expenses.

Accordingly, he invested in a flock of sheep, and it was while driving these home that he made his discovery, which he has since turned to such good account. Along the road near the Mansfield ranch the salt-bush grew in abundance, and to the ranchman's amazement the sheep began feeding upon it greedily. He figured that the year before, in trying to get rid of what he supposed to be a noxious weed, he had destroyed about five hundred dollars' worth of good sheep feed besides wasting a great deal of labor.

The following year he increased his flock



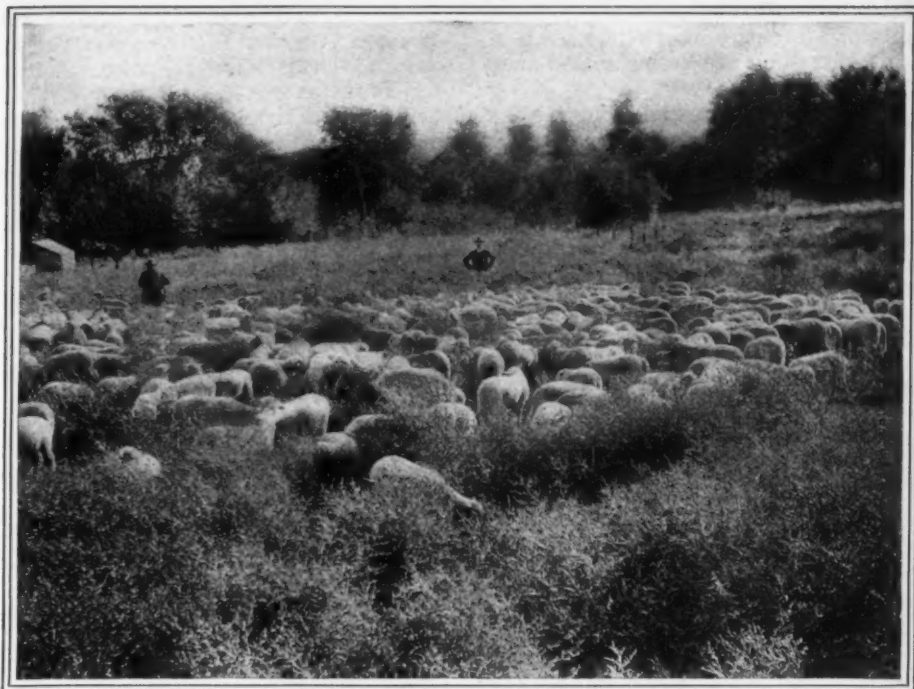
STACKS OF DRIED SALT-BUSH STORED ON THE MANSFIELD RANCH AS FODDER FOR SHEEP

regarded as worthless; as a matter of fact, the salt-bush has been considered such a pest that there is a law in at least one State against allowing it to go to seed. If further and more extensive tests prove as satisfactory as those already made, it appears that here is practically a virgin field of sheep-raising, offering wonderful opportunities.

Mr. Mansfield's discovery came about in a peculiar way. For several years he farmed some three thousand acres of land, all of it wheat land with the exception of one hundred and fifty acres, which were sub-irrigated alfalfa land. Finally his fields became so foul with Russian thistles that this, together with the high cost of labor and the low price of wheat, made it impossible for him to continue the growing of

of sheep to a thousand head, and decided to try the experiment of feeding them exclusively on the salt-bush. The animals were first turned loose on five acres of ground on which the bush grew thickly, and although kept there for two weeks, they did not clean up all the feed. This patch of land had been used for two years as a yard for the feeding of stock, and its soil was richer than most of the surrounding area. Ordinarily, however, the salt-bush will grow freely on the most arid and unfertilized land, and requires practically no attention after once getting a stand.

Later in the summer Mr. Mansfield made some hay of the weed, but on account of the scarcity of labor he was not able to haul it in out of the shock. He had to drive his sheep through the field containing



A TRACT OF SALT-BUSH WITH A HERD OF SHEEP FEEDING ON IT



LAND SIMILAR TO THE TRACT SHOWN IN THE UPPER ENGRAVING, AFTER THE SHEEP HAVE CLEARED OFF THE SALT-BUSH WITH WHICH IT WAS COVERED

this hay to a stubble-field where there was plenty of other pasture; but the sheep always preferred the salt-bush hay, and would stop there to eat it.

Although his experiment during the first year convinced Mr. Mansfield that he had made a valuable discovery, he was loath to announce it for fear of misleading other farmers. It was not until after he had tried it for a second season, with equally good results, that he felt justified in giving it to the public. Other farmers in the same vicinity have since pastured small flocks of sheep on the salt-bush, and are hearty in indorsing his report. In every case where the sheep have been fed on the bush they have been superior, both in flesh and in wool, to other sheep in the same vicinity which were grazed on ordinary pasture.

The Australian salt-bush is a much-branched perennial, which forms a thick mat over the ground to a height of about two feet. Its branches extend laterally for

several feet, and frequently a single plant will cover an area of fifteen or even twenty square feet. Its leaves are about an inch long, broad at the apex, coarsely toothed along the margin, fleshy, and slightly mealy on the surface. It belongs to the genus *Atriplex* and to the chenopod or goosefoot family—of which that troublesome Western weed, the Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), is also a member. The seeds germinate better if sown on the surface, which should be planked or firmed by driving a flock of sheep across it. When covered to any depth, the seeds decay before germination.

There are great stretches of black alkali land in the United States, of no use for anything else, on which the salt-bush would thrive. It is confidently asserted that if these acres were sown to the salt-bush they would support millions of sheep, and would enable our Western ranchers to produce more wool and more mutton than the whole country now raises.

ANSWER TO AN INVITATION

Yes, I will play, but it must be with fire,
Though only for an hour should be the game;
I care not if I burn, so you be flame,
But bring me not the small change of desire!

Yes, I will sail, if you fear not to drown,
If you fear not to swim the unfathomed sea,
To dive into its moonlit heart with me,
Hand in my hand, down deep, and still deep down.

Yes, I will fly, if you fear not the height
Nor yet the depth of all that blue abyss;
Love spans it in the lightning of a kiss—
With you and me be there no lesser flight!

I will not make a toy of this strange thing
That, at your touch, goes, calling through my veins—
The god each petty amorist profanes;
Your little kisses to the winds I fling.

Nor of your beauty will I honey take,
Sipping and tasting of you like a bee;
'Tis a far other love for you and me—
Let other smaller folk their small love make!

But if you come to me with wild, lost lips,
In a great darkness made of a great light,
Then shall our wings mount in an equal flight,
Nor fear, though all the firmament eclipse.

Though from the zenith to the pit we fall,
Breast against breast and eyes adream on eyes,
We shall be one with suns and seas and skies—
The power and the glory of it all!

Nicholas Breton

Heroines of Yesterday

WIVES AND MOTHERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION—THEIR SPLENDID COURAGE
AND PATRIOTISM IN THE TIMES THAT TRIED MEN'S SOULS

By Carl Holliday

Professor of English in the University of Toledo

WE all know what the women of America accomplished and endured for the national cause during the great war now happily ended, and what they are still doing in many lines of patriotic service. It is interesting to turn back the pages of history and see what their great-great-grandmothers did and thought at another momentous crisis. We all have read what George Washington and John Adams and other founders of this nation thought of patriotism and sacrifice in righteous war; but what were the opinions of Martha Washington and Abigail Adams and other wives and mothers who suffered in that period of trial?

That George Washington trusted greatly in the patriotism, the loyalty, and the endurance of his wife is evident from the confidential letters he wrote her. He apparently concealed nothing from her—his doubts, his fears, his disappointments, his weariness. Every student of Colonial literature is familiar with his affectionate note to her written upon his acceptance of office as commander-in-chief of the army:

You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being too great for my capacity; and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. My unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness you will feel from being left alone.

But did Mrs. Washington sit idly in "uneasiness"? By no means. She immediately set every agency of production under her control to "speeding up"—just what we were asked to do in 1917. Years

later she declared with pardonable pride that, with her negro servants, she kept sixteen spinning-wheels in constant operation, and that two of her best war-time dresses were made of old crimson damask chair-covers and the ravelings of brown-silk stockings. Her footman, her coachman, and her maid were attired in cloth made at home, and her only regret was that the coachman's scarlet cuffs were imported. But there was one consolation—they were imported *before the war*.

Nor was she contented to show her patriotism merely at home. Wherever she went, she was an inspiring example of self-sacrificing industry. Read these words from a lady who visited the wife of the commander-in-chief at the army headquarters:

Well, I will honestly tell you, I never was so ashamed in all my life. You see, Madam Budd and myself thought we would visit Lady Washington, and as she was said to be so grand a lady, we thought we must put on our best bibs and bands. So we dressed ourselves in our most elegant ruffles and silks, and were introduced to her ladyship. And don't you think we found her *knitting and with a speckled apron on!* She received us very graciously and easily, but after the compliments were over, she resumed her knitting. There we were without a stitch of work, and sitting in state, but General Washington's lady with her own hands was knitting stockings for herself and husband!

And that was not all. In the afternoon her ladyship took occasion to say, in a way that we could not be offended at, that it was very important at this time that American ladies should be patterns of industry to their countrymen, because the separation from the mother country will dry up the sources whence many of our comforts have been derived. We must become independent by our determination to do without what we cannot make ourselves. Whilst our husbands and brothers are examples of patriotism, we must be patterns of industry!

What a Spartan mother was Abigail Adams! Every night during those years of strife she called her son, John Quincy Adams—destined to be the sixth President of the United States—and bade him recite that famous ode of Collins:

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blessed!

With such a wife, John Adams might well go forth to risk his all to found a new nation. His first definite step was taken in May, 1774, when he became a member of the Revolutionary Provincial Congress of Massachusetts. He wrote to a friend:

When I went home to my family from the town meeting in Boston, I said to my wife:

"I have accepted a seat in the House of Representatives, and thereby have consented to my own ruin, to your ruin, and to the ruin of our children. I give you this warning that you may prepare your mind for your fate."

She burst into tears, but instantly cried in a transport of magnanimity:

"Well, I am willing in this cause to run all risks with you, and be ruined with you, if you are ruined!"

These were times, my friend, in Boston, which tried women's souls as well as men's.

And when the day of actual carnage came, when devastation stalked over the land, like a cloud of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night, this woman just as patiently and just as bravely awaited the outcome of the struggle for liberty. Long years afterward John Quincy Adams remembered the quiet fortitude of his mother, and wrote:

For the space of twelve months my mother with her infant children dwelt liable every hour of the day and of the night to be butchered in cold blood, or taken and carried into Boston as hostages. My mother lived in unintermitted danger of being consumed with them all in a conflagration kindled by a torch in the same hands which on the 17th of June, 1775, lighted the fires at Charlestown. I saw with my own eyes those fires, and heard Britannia's thunders in the battle of Bunker Hill, and witnessed the tears of my mother and mingled them with my own.

Mrs. Adams herself wrote of such an occasion:

I went to bed about twelve, and rose again a little after one. I could no more sleep than if I had been in the engagement; the rattling of the windows, the jar of the house, the continual roar of twenty-four-pounders, and the bursting of shells give us such ideas, and realize a scene to us of which we could form scarcely any conception.

Months passed without a word from John Adams—months when his wife would say:

I would rather give a dollar for a letter by the post, though the consequence should be that I ate but one meal a day these three weeks to come.

Mrs. Adams converted young John Quincy into a postboy to ride daily the round trip of twenty-two miles between her farm at Braintree and Boston. In the midst of such loneliness, anxiety, and danger she had the valor to write her husband:

All domestic pleasures and enjoyments are absorbed in the great and important duty you owe your country, for our country is, as it were, a secondary god, and the first and greatest parent. It is to be preferred to parents, wives, children, friends, and all things, the gods only excepted; for, if our country perishes, it is as impossible to save an individual as to preserve one of the fingers of a mortified hand.

Small wonder that John Adams told her:

You are really brave, my dear. You are a heroine, and you have reason to be. For the worst that can happen can do you no harm. A soul as pure, as benevolent, as virtuous, and pious as yours has nothing to fear, but everything to hope, from the last of human evils.

On a wedding anniversary observed in loneliness, Mrs. Adams wrote:

This day, dearest of friends, completes thirteen years since we were solemnly united in wedlock. Three years of this time we have been cruelly separated; I have, patiently as I could, endured it with the belief that you were serving your country.

Eliza Pinckney, of South Carolina, one of the most brilliant women America ever produced, saw her beloved sons ride away to serve with Washington; and in the midst of her loneliness, with the enemy devastating the South on every hand, there came a letter from one son, announcing that the plantation home had been burned. With steady hand she wrote in her reply:

MY DEAR TOM:

I have just received your letter with the account of my losses, and your almost ruined fortunes by the enemy. A severe blow! But I feel not for myself, but for you.

Your brother's timely, generous offer to divide what little remains to him among us is worthy of him.

Before the war closed, Madam Pinckney, who had been one of the richest women in the colonies, was obliged to write to a creditor who presented a bill:

I am sorry I am under a necessity to send this unaccompanied with the amount of my account due to you. It may seem strange that a single woman, accused of no crime, who had a fortune to live genteelly in any part of the world, that fortune,

too, in different kinds of property, and in four or five different parts of the country, should in so short a time be so entirely deprived of it as not to be able to pay a debt under sixty pounds sterling; but such is my singular case. After the many losses I have met with, for the last three or four desolating years from fire and plunder, both in country and town, I still had something to subsist upon; but alas, the hand of power has deprived me of the greatest part of that, and accident of the rest.

It was such a mother whose training caused Charles Pinckney to make, in an hour of trial, that memorable declaration so dear to every American:

Millions for defense, but not a cent for tribute!

If ever there was a "war bride," Catherine Van Rensselaer Schuyler, of New York, was one. From girlhood to old age she was in the midst of military campaigns. She had been married but a week when her husband was called away to fight the Indians. Many a time she bade him farewell with the keen realization that it might be their last meeting on earth; but hers was a courage equal to that of Martha Washington or Eliza Pinckney.

During the Revolution, shortly after the battle of Saratoga, the British, Tories, and Indians came sweeping through the country toward her husband's estate. Despairing women and children choked the roads leading into the towns. Catherine Schuyler thought of the rich fields of grain about her home and the treasures lying in the family mansion, and she determined that neither food nor heirlooms should fall into the hands of the enemy.

Back into the country she sped. All along the way the hurrying refugees warned her to turn back, but she was deaf to all appeals. She reached the great farm, and, taking with her a badly frightened negro to spread the fire, she went down to the fields. The negro had no heart for the task; for he feared the vengeance of the foe.

"Very well!" she declared. "If you will not do it, I must do it myself."

And with that she threw the torches here and there amid the grain, and saw the flames sweep across the flats. Hastily gathering the family valuables, she fled back to Albany. Within twenty-four hours the enemy had burned the mansion to the ground.

Then came a real test of Christian womanhood. Within a few weeks Burgoyne, who had destroyed her country home, was defeated and a captive in her

Albany residence. Less noble people would have wreaked a bitter revenge upon him, but, says Chastellux, the French traveler, then in America:

Burgoyne was extremely well received by Mrs. Schuyler and her little family. He was lodged in the best apartment in the house. An excellent supper was served him in the evening, the honors of which were done with so much grace that he was affected even to tears, and could not help saying, with a deep sigh:

"Indeed, this is doing too much for a man who has ravaged their lands and burned their home!"

That Burgoyne was distinctly embarrassed by the turn of fate and the kindly treatment of his former victims is shown in his own words:

I expressed my regret at the event which had happened, and the reasons which had occasioned it. He desired me to think no more about it; said the occasion justified it, according to the rules and principles of war, and he should have done the same.

Mercy Warren, the sharp-tongued author of the Colonial satire, "Woman's Trifling Needs," forgot her sarcasm in the days of war, and offered her all to her country. Her husband was indeed her all, and his absence was agony to her. She wrote:

Oh, these painful absences! Ten thousand anxieties invade my bosom on your account, and sometimes hold my lids waking many hours of the cold and lonely night.

This was not a complaint; it was only the natural outcry of her love, and during the struggle she repeatedly urged on her husband with her enthusiasm and faithful trust in the justice of his cause.

Those were indeed days of fervent zeal and joyous sacrifice. Women accustomed to the finest silks and satins joined the patriotic society called Daughters of Liberty and vowed to wear no garment not made of homespun. No tea imported by the foe should touch their lips; no luxury would be bought while the soldiers were in need. Early in the morning women of quality might be seen carrying their spinning-wheels through the streets to a common meeting-place, where all day they spun and wove that the national resources might be saved. High or low, every woman "did her bit" that the new nation might survive.

With such ancestors, with such a heritage, it is no wonder that the American women of to-day have shown themselves worthy of their great and splendid country.

The Book of Changes

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

SHE was called the Huntress. The remote islands of lower Puget Sound knew her by no other name.

She had arrived at Waldron Island on the Seattle packet-boat. Old Jimmy, postmaster, storekeeper, oracle, and chronicle of Waldron, said afterward that she was a young, handsome girl, with reddish hair, not over twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, and that she wore no wedding-ring.

Further, Jimmy said that he believed the poor girl to be *hiyu pelton* in the head, which in the Siwash tongue means "insane." Presently the few fishermen and Indians of the region came to agree to this diagnosis—all save Tumbo Tom, the old Indian medicine-man and bow-maker.

Jimmy based his conclusions touching the state of the girl's mind on several circumstances. She had asked to be directed to some uninhabited island where yew-trees grew. She had asked for the name and address of the nearest maker of bows and arrows. She had opened a purse containing American gold and foreign-looking money, and had paid old Jimmy five dollars to row her to the military reservation island when the trip hadn't been worth a penny over six bits.

Jimmy got word to Tumbo Tom, who dwelt on another island near by, and Tumbo beached his high-prowed canoe upon the shore of the reserve island. Across the channel sounded the thump of an ax, the crash of falling trees, the lesser noise of a hand-hammer. A cabin reared itself in the border of the forest of giant cedar and fir trees. Tumbo brought a smaller canoe to the island and left it there.

Then Tumbo returned to his own little cabin on the near-by island. When inquisitive fishermen plied the old savage with questions, Tumbo's replies were as guarded and Delphic as the words of a spirit whispering riddles among the spruce-trees.

A fisherman, drawing his purse-seine to a pucker, had drifted into the lee of the reserve island. He had heard a crashing in the brush, and a deer had broken from covert, to fall dead upon the sands with an arrow through its heart. A girl, red hair streaming over her shoulders, half naked, had come springing down the slope. At sight of the fisherman in the offing, she had fled wildly back into the forest.

Old Jimmy, hearing the fisherman's colorful account of the episode, was consumed with curiosity. The Huntress had rented a post-office box under the name of Jane Smith. No mail had ever arrived for the box number, but a weekly newspaper, either Japanese or Chinese, Jimmy didn't know which.



TUMBO TOM'S LITTLE BLACK EYES GLINTED CUNNINGLY AS THE ARCHERS PASSED THE BOW—

A letter addressed to a woman who had died a year before lay in the post-office. Jimmy took the letter, studied it a moment, tucked it into the pocket of his tarpaulin coat, climbed into his dory, and rowed away.

Without knowing clearly just why he acted with such circumspection, Jimmy beached the dory very softly and walked lightly up the slope toward the cedar-shake cabin. From some spot not far into the wood there came a twanging noise and a faint thudding. He walked on, and then came to a sudden pause, while his lower jaw jarred open and remained pendulous.

Where the tall firs chanced to grow in orderly array, the girl had set up a target of woven reeds and grass. From a distance of something over a hundred yards, she was shooting arrows into the target from a man-length yew bow. Her reddish hair, done into a single thick braid, hung down her back. Upon her feet were sandals or moc-casins of seal-hide. She was clothed in a robelike garment of doeskin, which left her arms free and bare, and which depended to her naked knees.

At the sound of Jimmy's exclamation, the

girl turned and regarded him coldly. She stepped forward, took the letter, turned it over, examined it curiously, and handed it back. Sternly she directed him to bring no more mail to her island.

Jimmy turned, reentered his dory, and rowed away.

"You'd never know her," said Jimmy to his fisherman audience. "She's been on the island—let's see, it's going on a year. When she came she weighed about a hundred and ten; now she'll go a hundred and forty strong. Shoot the bow and arrow! I've lived in the islands fifty years, and I've seen Talapus George at his best, and Chief Chimiaccum, but I never saw such shooting as that girl does—no!"

Tumbo Tom, using staves of yew that he had laid away for months, that he had rubbed and rubbed with oil of dog-salmon's liver, made the first bow for the Huntress. He made a second and a third, while she sat by watching narrowly every operation of cutting down the piece in the rough and scraping it with a clam-shell.

Then the Huntress made a bow. That she had bettered Tom's instruction was attested by his state ment that he



—COLONEL NOGI HAD MADE NO BID, BUT STOOD FONDLING THE WONDERFUL, TOUGH, PERFECTLY BALANCED STAVE OF YEW

had never seen a bow so finely, so perfectly balanced. Instead of wrapping the nocking-point about with green seal-hide, she had wrapped her bow as bamboo fishing-rods are wound; only she used strands of copper-colored hair from her own head instead of silk.

Beneath the arched firs she had laid off a space one hundred and twenty-eight yards in length. She called it her hall of three and thirty spans. There every day she practised, arrow after arrow, tirelessly, though at first the raw flesh of her bow thumb and finger had dripped red.

A second year passed, and a third. Twice a month Tumbo Tom fetched her newspapers; now and then he carried a sack of rice or a tin of tea. Occasionally some one questioned Tumbo concerning the strange, wild girl, but he kept his counsel, as savages do. Molested by no one, seen only at intervals by passing fishermen, it came to pass that she was spoken of as if she had been the heroine of some island legend, a being who had been, but who was no more.

II

IN Victoria, on Vancouver Island, about two sides of which cluster the American San Juan Islands, is held every year the tournament of the Overseas Archery Association. Among the competitors will be found the foremost archers of the world—English, Welsh, Scottish, Turkish, Japanese.

A high-prowed Indian canoe hauled out on the shore near the estuary of Victoria. An old Indian, as wrinkled as the bark on a dead madroña-tree, walked up the street and along the dusty road to the archery field. In among the throng gathered about the butts he walked, unwrapped the deer-skins from about a bow that he was carrying, and stood silent, holding it in his claw-like hand.

Aye, this was a bow made of the ancient yew, like those of Strongbow and of the merry archers of Sherwood Forest. This bow was wrapped about at the nocking-point with strands of copper-colored human hair.

His lordship of Glenartney knew a bow. He took the weapon from the old brave's hand, and held it as if it had been a relic.

Effendi Mahmoud also knew a bow, for he was the world's foremost bowyer, and had hurled an arrow from a Turkish bow a distance of four hundred and eighty

yards. Effendi Mahmoud took the stave of red-brown yew from the Scotsman's hand.

Colonel Nogi, of the Japanese imperial army, likewise knew a bow, for the modern Samurai practises the art of Wada Daihachi and of Ulysses as indefatigably as did the warriors of a thousand years ago.

Tumbo Tom's little black eyes glinted cunningly as the Scotsman, the Turk, and the Japanese passed the bow from one to another.

Glenartney would give fifty English pounds for the bow. Effendi Mahmoud would give a hundred. Colonel Nogi had made no bid, but stood fondling the wonderful, tough, perfectly balanced stave of yew.

"You swear a promise never give away, never sell to any one," said Tumbo, addressing Nogi, "and you have bow for one piece money."

Nogi, smiling at the simplicity of the savage and the discomfiture of his rivals, drew a gold piece from his pocket and tossed it to Tumbo. The Indian took it gravely, returned to the estuary, climbed into his canoe.

"You sold it?" demanded the Huntress eagerly.

"Yes—for one piece money."

Tumbo handed the girl the gold piece.

"English money!" she said disappointedly, handing the coin back to the Indian.

"King Chautch money"—the Northwest Indian equivalent for English—"all right," said Tumbo; "but brown man, Jap, he give it. You tell me watch for Japanese man shoot arrow, and sell him bow for any piece money. You see it in Japan newspaper that Jap come here shoot arrow. He buy bow for one piece money."

"You did finely, Tumbo!" said the girl. "It is exactly— Did you see the archers shoot, Tumbo?"

"Two, three, four time, maybe."

"Like this, any of them?"

The Huntress took a bow that was leaning against the wall of the cabin and fitted an arrow to the string. At the distant end of her hall of three and thirty spans stood a peeled sapling, no thicker than her thumb. She drew the arrow to the head. There was a twang—a sweet humming—a crack. Fairly in twain she had split the Robin Hood's mark.

A moment she stood, poised. The single garment of doeskin revealed a figure all

grace and silky smoothness, yet muscled as with steel. Standing there in the border of the deep forest, she might have been the Versailles "Diana of the Chase," breathed into life by some gracious Aphrodite.

Tumbo Tom muttered his brief words of praise, but the girl's cold features showed neither pride nor exultation. Abruptly she turned and entered the cabin. Tumbo slid his canoe free, paddled away.

Pinned to the wall of the cabin were Japanese prints, gaily colored. One showed a hideously grinning Samurai, wearing five swords of varying lengths in his girdle. Beside him was a five-line verse, written in perpendicular Japanese characters. Upon a square of wrapping-paper the Huntress had drawn a calendar covering a period of years. The date on which she had landed at the island was circled by a black ring made with the burned end of a stick. A date some six weeks before was also black-circled.

With the burned stick she proceeded to mark a third circle about the current date—for it was the third anniversary of her arrival, and, more epochal still, it was the day upon which Tumbo Tom had sold the bow to Colonel Nogi of the Japanese army. Still another significance the day held—it was her birthday; she was twenty-four years old.

Dispassionately she regarded the calendar. What were days or years to her any longer? What was life?

Aloud, she read the inscription on the Japanese print:

"More fleeting than the glint of withered leaf wind-blown is the thing called life."

III

BARON KATO ISAMURO lifted his head from the wooden pillow. The bitter wind, blowing from the mountains of Kamchatka, sifted the powdered snow in about the sliding, paper-covered panels of the room. Upon the bare floor the white grains lay in little drifts, and across the single army blanket which covered him.

Baron Kato rose and slipped into a padded pongee coat. Into his girdle, though in peace-time the wearing of swords is unlawful, he thrust five swords of varying lengths.

In a corner of the cell-like room was a squat statue of Buddha. As the Japanese paused before the image, his rugged fea-

tures smoothed themselves into lines as placid as those of the fat-faced idol.

Arousing himself as from a pleasant dream, Kato lifted a battered book from a shelf and began to turn the pages, with their perpendicular writing. It was the "Book of Changes," which teaches a Samurai how to live—and how to die.

Upon the title-page were the words—"Regulations for Samurai of Every Rank." Followed pages of harsh, ascetic rules:

Archery and gunnery must not be neglected.

The staple of diet shall be unhulled rice.

When death comes to him who fears death, it is like the passing of a noxious weed.

Dancing and couplet-writing are unlawful; to be addicted to such amusements is to resemble a woman. A man born a Samurai should live and die sword in hand.

A page or two Kato read, then laid down the book and slid back one of the paper-covered panels. Before him was a modern door of oak. He inserted a key in the lock, opened the door.

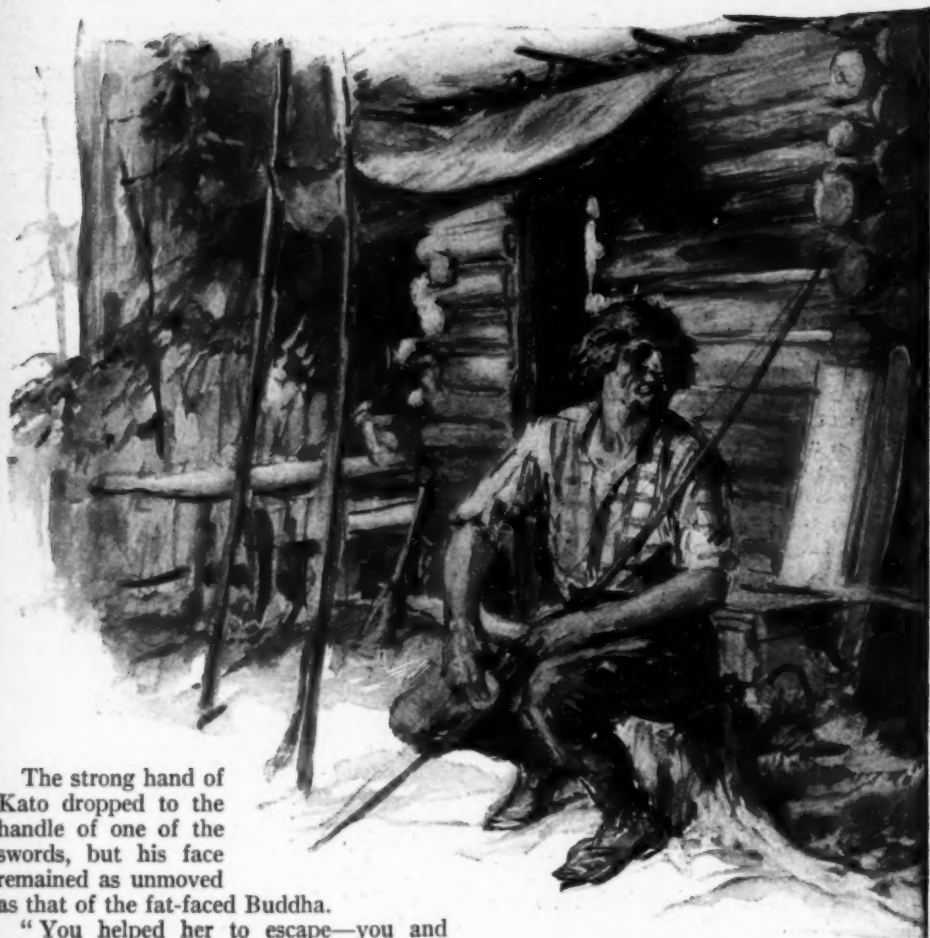
Passing through, he entered the ante-room of a veritable palace. The ceiling was high-vaulted, the walls were hung with tapestries. In the corner was the omnipresent fat-faced Buddha. One tapestry showed a Samurai, his fanglike teeth exposed in a wolfish snarl, one knotted hand upholding a threatening sword.

Through a second door Kato passed. Here a cheerful fire crackled in a grate. The furniture was modern, frail, delicate, superbly carved. Through an open door a little white crib was visible.

Kato lifted a wooden hammer and struck a suspended copper bell. A door to the left opened. A Japanese woman—of high caste, to judge from her garb and her fine features—came forward with short, mincing steps. She had two thick gold bodkins thrust through her enamel-smooth black hair.

"Where is the blossom girl?" demanded Kato.

"Gone!" answered the woman, staring stupidly before her. "I helped her to get away—last night, while you slept. She is gone. I led her through the snow to the pagoda not yet completed, that you had told her was to be a shrine. I showed her the iron bars cunningly hidden beneath the hangings, destined to be her cell of shame. I am your wife, daughter of a Samurai. You shall mock the daughter of a Samurai with no Yoshiwara mistress. She is gone!"



The strong hand of Kato dropped to the handle of one of the swords, but his face remained as unmoved as that of the fat-faced Buddha.

"You helped her to escape—you and your kinsman, Mosohito?"

The woman continued to stare straight ahead. Kato stepped to a lacquered cabinet and took from a small box a pellet wrapped in silver-foil. He placed the pellet in the woman's hand. She turned into the room where stood the white crib, and closed the door.

For a moment she hung over the crib, then walked on into an adjoining apartment. She seated herself upon a tabouret before a mirror, smoothed her hair, readjusted one of the gold bodkins.

Daughter of a Samurai, she had been taught from infancy to contemplate death with serenity, and even with indifference. Almost a suspicion of a derisive smile showed upon her fine features. She lifted her face and recited a Japanese verse:

"More fleeting than the glint of withered leaf wind-blown is the thing called life."

TUMBO TOM MUTTERED HIS BRIEF WORDS OF PRAISE,
BUT THE GIRL'S COLD FEATURES SHOWED
NEITHER PRIDE NOR EXULTATION—

She placed the silvered pellet between her lips.

Baron Kato, watching the door close after the woman, clapped his hands and called to the serving-girl to bring him his bowl of unhulled rice.

He ate, clapped his hands, and called a name:

"Mosohito!"

A powerfully built Japanese stood respectfully in the doorway.

"I would practise with the bow, Mosohito," said Kato, "in the three and thirty span hall."

Outside the palace, standing in a grove of scrubby trees, was a long, low building, an exact replica of the thirty-three-span



—SHE DREW THE ARROW TO THE HEAD. THERE WAS A TWANG—A SWEET HUMMING—A CRACK. FAIRLY IN TWAIN HAD SHE SPLIT THE ROBIN HOOD'S MARK

archery hall of Kyoto. Here, every day, Kato practised. Never had he equaled the records of Wada Daihachi and Masatoki, each of whom had shot into the clout, at a distance of one hundred and twenty-eight yards, more than four arrows a minute for twenty consecutive hours; but some time he would do as well. Aye, some day he would do as well! The iron will that had brought

Kato a high command in the Russian war, that had made him the absolute feudal monarch of a far northern island, would some day make him equal to Wada Daihachi and Masatoki.

"I would shoot a thousand arrows, Mosohito."

Kato paused at the door of the hall, while Mosohito fetched bundles of arrows

and his master's favorite bow, an English yew bow of eighteenth-century make. Kato had given a hundred English pounds for it. For its equal he would give a thousand pounds—two thousand pounds for its better.

Kato stepped to the door, a steel-barbed arrow nocked to place.

"Mosohito," said Kato, "the snow without is not so very deep. Three and thirty spans is the distance to yonder sheltering clump of trees. Until you have gained the shelter of the trees, I will bend no bow!"

Mosohito sprang away through the snow and leaped in among the tree-trunks. Kato drew the arrow to his cheek; the bow-string twanged like the strings of a samisen when the minstrel strikes into a heroic lay of the old Samurai.

IV

ULRICA JENSEN's last letter had come to David Hannay from Kyoto. She was having a wonderful time. She had journeyed from Nagasaki to Osaka by steamer, thence to Kyoto in a man-drawn cart. On the steamer she had met a devotee of Buddhism. She had admired and envied the man's serenity of mind, the sufficiency of his religion—or philosophy. She proposed to learn more of Buddhism. She was a seeker after truth. Truth lay hidden in a well. She proposed to plumb the depths.

How like her, David thought with vague disquietude! Ulrica Jensen, the Valkyr, daughter of the Vikings! Bold blood of the fearless Norsemen ran in her veins.

No further word did he receive. Three years passed by. He wrote, cabled, communicated with United States ministers and consuls. No word!

David's occupation was with dyestuffs and pigments. He was a chemist. In his work he found what he thought was an analogy to the situation. For a fine, clean, white girl to dabble in Oriental mysticism, to him, touched the chemical law of incompatibles. You mix potassium chlorate with tincture of iron; result—explosion. Mix East with West; result—

Kipling had already expressed the same idea in his "Ballad of East and West," only David didn't know it. He never read poetry; he preferred to read monographs on "The Phlogistic Theory of Affinals."

The war having brought to a stop the importation of dyestuffs, David's hitherto ignored formula for fixing pigments in cotton

and woolen fabrics became worth a fortune. With more money in his possession than he had expected to handle in a lifetime, he set forth for Seattle, thence journeyed to Nagasaki, to Osaka, to Kyoto, and home again. Here and there he caught faint, elusive traces of Ulrica. He learned that she had returned to America—and that was all.

Then luck favored him. In Seattle he got track of an officer on a coastwise vessel who remembered observing a passenger with red hair—a beautiful, frail young girl, who left the boat somewhere in the San Juan Islands.

So, at last, David came to the island of the military reserve.

Stealing through the wood, he found a hiding-place in a clump of shrubbery. Finally she came, a dryad, clad in a single garment of doeskin, a bow in her hand, arrows in a quiver upon her back.

From his hiding-place David stared at her, and then clasped his hands to his face. It was she—it was not she—he could not decide. Rica had been slender, almost ethereal. This girl, though grace itself, was robust, Junolike. That naked brown arm of hers was more thickly muscled than his own. That copper-colored hair—Rica's! It was she!

A bird came flying by far overhead. The Huntress lifted her bow and snapped an arrow to the nocking-point. Grotesquely fluttering, beating its futile wings against the shaft that had pierced it, the bird came to earth.

It was not she! Rica had fainted once, when the machine in which they were riding had struck a dog. It couldn't be she!

Still—he watched her narrowly. Her walk, imperious, purposeful—it was Rica's walk. The way she held her head slightly to one side—that copper-colored hair—it was Rica!

David stepped from cover. At the sound of his footfall the girl turned. She gave a barely perceptible start. Then her eyes settled upon him blankly, unblinkingly, like those of an image.

He stretched forth his hands, spoke her name. She laughed harshly, pointed for him to go. Still he stood, his arms spread. She began to back away slowly, fitting an arrow to the string.

"Go!" she said. "Go!"

Still he did not move. She lifted the bow, let fly the arrow, which struck, quivering, into the tree-trunk beside him.

Through the thicket of trees she watched him while he made his way dejectedly to the beach. Then her knees weakened beneath her. She sank slowly to the earth, where she lay in a huddled heap.

Upon the wharf before old Jimmy's store, David awaited the packet-boat that would take him back to Seattle. A hand

merciful in a negative way only. Cho Densu's famous portrait of Kwannon shows her sitting coldly silent beside a cold stream that issues from the cold snows of Fuji-yama.

"There is no passion, affection, birth, or death," whispered the Huntress, gazing fixedly at the fat-faced Buddha. "There is



touched him up on the shoulder. An old, wrinkled Indian stood beside him, grinning vacuously. The Indian dropped something into David's hand—

a tiny, gold-mounted fountain pen, marked with the initials "U. J." Four years before, David had bought that pen in a Cincinnati jewelry-store as a gift for Rica.

The packet-boat came. David sat staring at the trinket in his hand. The boat whistled shrilly and warped out. Sitting with the pen in his hand, David became aware that the boat had come and gone, and was a lessening dot in the distant channel leading toward Seattle.

V

THE Huntress sat silent and motionless. Her countenance, mirroring the character of her meditations, was stern, stoic, rather than serene.

Mamjusri, the Japanese god of wisdom, is pictured always as being a fanged man-brute. Kwannon, the goddess of mercy, is

HE STRETCHED FORTH HIS HANDS, SPOKE
HER NAME. SHE LAUGHED HARSHLY,
POINTED FOR HIM TO GO

no beginning and no end. A Samurai must live and die sword in hand. An enemy has injured; wash clean the defilement in his blood!"

A knock sounded upon the door. Tumbo Tom stood without, a soiled letter in his hand.

"Boat man, he carry this letter to one island, another, then give to me," explained Tom.

The letter bore a Japanese postmark and Japanese stamps. It was addressed to "The Bow-Maker of the San Juans."

She opened it and read. A triumphant gleam showed in her dark eyes. Spreading the letter, she searched for a bit of paper and prepared to write. Her fountain pen was missing. Strange! As she continued to search for the pen, Tumbo Tom stood by, outstaring the fat-faced Buddha.

The pen was gone. Strange! She took a pencil and wrote swiftly:

Colonel Nogi is *not* absolved from his promise neither to sell nor to give away the bow of yew.

The bow-maker of the San Juans possesses an equally wonderful bow, which is not for sale. Some day it shall be a gift into the hand found worthy to bend it.

The Huntress addressed the envelope to "Baron Kato Isamuro, Myriad Islands, Japan, Far North."

Some few weeks later a smiling, silk-hatted Japanese sought out Tumbo Tom. The Japanese had been commissioned by one mighty in his own country to give a thousand English pounds for a bow equal to the bow of Colonel Nogi.

Tumbo shook his head. He had no bow for sale; he was not the bow-maker of the San Juans.

The Japanese smiled, and departed in his smart launch. Where the channel wound between two islands, the launch veered to one side and came to anchor. From the island's wooded top the Japanese watched Tumbo Tom through his glasses as the old Indian reported the circumstance to the Huntress.

The Japanese reembarked, the launch went on toward Seattle.

Every day the Huntress practised indefatigably with the bow and arrow, her brief hours of rest being spent in meditating the aphorisms of the "Book of Changes." Most often upon her lips, always present in her consciousness, were the five-line verse of the withered leaf, wind-blown, and the command:

"An enemy has injured; wash clean the defilement in his blood."

Five rounds she had fired, every arrow a perfect hit, when through the trees she caught sight of the fine yacht that came to anchor off Tumbo Tom's island. A single exclamation escaped her as she saw the launch return to the yacht, the sailors swarm up the side ladder, and a small boat come on toward the reserve island, rowed by a single man.

Bow in hand she stood, the wind gently flapping her doeskin robe about her knees. Straight toward her he came, with more warmth in his bright, black eyes than had ever emanated before from his cold, hard, Samurai soul.

"You have come!" she said evenly. "So I planned it. No lying words!" she expostulated fiercely, as he broke into extravagant courtier speech. "You have come! So I planned it."

She stepped past him, entered the cabin, and returned, holding in her hand a wonder-

ful bow of yew wound about the nocking-point with hair from her own head.

"For him worthy to bend it," she said. "Come!"

She stood pointing down the vista of her forest hall of three and thirty spans.

"The gage!" he demanded. "What shall it be?"

"The winner shall name it," she said, "after the round is shot."

The slant eyes of Baron Kato glittered hungrily as they roamed over the marvelous figure of the Huntress and came to a sleepy rest upon the beautiful face flushing through the tan.

"The winner names the gage," he said. "The loser pays—no matter what!"

"Yes."

Baron Kato stripped off his coat of Christian cut and rolled up his Christian sleeves, revealing the knotted, corded muscles of his pagan, Samurai arms. The arrows began humming, thudding into the clout. A dozen arrows he fired—a perfect score.

He watched her narrowly as she drew her first. Smooth and silken was that round, brown arm. How absurd the old myth of the Greeks that the Amazons cut off the right breast lest it hamper the bow-string!

Her first arrow into the clout, the second, a dozen—a perfect score.

Another round, and Kato had a miss. The Huntress also had a miss in the second round. Arrow to arrow they stood, and score to score.

The third round, and again Kato had a single miss—his last shot.

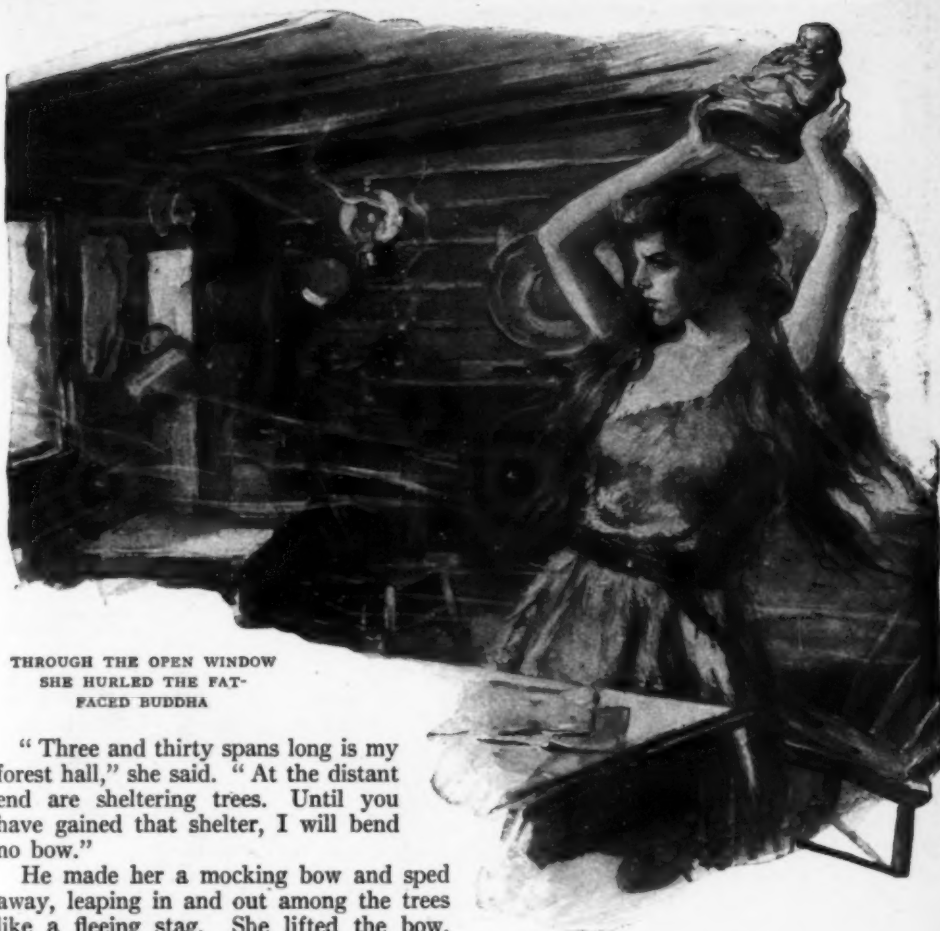
Nine arrows the Huntress fired perfectly—ten—eleven. Baron Kato smiled, for he was a Samurai. Twelve, a hit—a perfect score!

"I have lost—I pay the score," he said calmly, gazing into the girl's face. "Name the gage."

Not at once did she answer, but stood thoughtful as one confused, though a thousand times she had planned what should be hers when the hour arrived.

"Be merciful!" said Kato, jestingly yet earnestly. "Be merciful! For your sake, my children are motherless. For your sake, Mosohito died. Be merciful!"

At his words, she felt her blood surge hotly. Merciful! She would be merciful as the "Book of Changes" teaches mercy. A Samurai beg for mercy!



THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW
SHE HURLED THE FAT-
FACED BUDDHA

"Three and thirty spans long is my forest hall," she said. "At the distant end are sheltering trees. Until you have gained that shelter, I will bend no bow."

He made her a mocking bow and sped away, leaping in and out among the trees like a fleeing stag. She lifted the bow. The arrow sped.

A sobbing cry escaped her lips. Crying, sobbing hysterically, she flung the bow from her and ran to the shelter of the cabin. Through the open window she hurled the fat-faced Buddha. From the walls she tore the Japanese print with the five-line verse about the withered leaf, wind-blown. Tumbling her pitifully few belongings about, she searched forth a ring, set with a single brilliant. Kissing the ring again and again, she finally fell upon her knees beside her bed, bowed her head, and repeated a simple, old-fashioned Christian prayer of her childhood.

She arose, stripped off her barbaric raiment, and clothed herself in her garb of a Christian girl.

Drifting helplessly in the boat, Tumbo Tom found the Baron Kato, a yard-long

arrow through and through his body to the left of the shoulder-blade and just beneath the clavicle. Tom severed the arrow-head and drew forth the haft. The Indian paddled the boat to the side of the yacht, and the Japanese sailors helped their master up the side. From the rail, Kato smiled down at Tumbo Tom, for Kato was a Samurai even in the hour of death.

The girl, huntress no longer, opened the cabin door.

"Not a word!" said the caller, holding up a silencing hand. "I don't want to know. The past is dead, gone, buried. Let's talk about the present. Here are these arms of mine—"

"Oh, David!"

"There! There! Cry if you want to, Rica! Anyway, kiss me again. There!"



THREE

BY BEULAH

will look at him, open your heart to him," said the nurse. "See, he has your husband's eyes."

"No, he took my husband's love from me; I cannot, will not love him."

"He will die," sobbed the nurse.

"He is frail and delicate; you alone can nurse him into health and strength!"

But the woman turned her face to the wall, and presently she slept—and the child slept also; and the child's sleep was for eternity.

* * *

"I DON'T want to see him," moaned the young wife, closing her dark eyes and resolutely turning away. "I don't love him—I never shall love him."

"But he is a beautiful baby," whispered the nurse. "He is your child, your own little child." She placed the fragile infant, a boy, beside the young woman on the bed. "See how tiny he is; if you don't mother him he will die. Won't you open your arms to this little soul who is calling for you, begging for your love?"

"No," the woman persisted. "He has taken months of my life away, made me deny myself countless pleasures, robbed me of my youth—my beauty. I never wanted him before birth; how can I love him now?"

"Oh, but you will love him, if only you

"AND this is the end?" said the girl, pale lips drawn in agony, dark eyes black with pain.

"Yes," said the doctor. "There will be no little one."

"No little one!" Her frail hands tore at the coverings, and she smiled a wan smile.

"You should be glad," said the doctor.

"Your child would have had no name, would have been born of shame. It is better there was the accident."

"My child would have had a mother," answered the girl. "You've no right to think I am glad. I wanted it. I needed it. Always I've wanted my baby. If he had not been married, my baby would have had a name. My baby is not a child of shame, but a child of love!"



SOULS

POYNTER

"Hush, you must not excite yourself," said the doctor. "You will bring on a fever."

"What have I to live for?" moaned the girl, and that night, even as the young wife's child slept, the girl slept also.

* * *

THE way was dark, the road was stony; and it hurt his tender, bare feet. His little hands groped in the darkness, and struck against cold, bare walls. It was so black, so terrible—he was so tiny and afraid; and he cried aloud in anguish, but no one answered, no one came. Along down the stony chasm his little feet dragged, and he moaned all the way. His baby flesh was bruised and torn, and his baby heart was terrified.

Ahead, far, far ahead was a faint, glimmering light. If he could only reach that light before the nameless fear behind engulfed him! But the light was far away, and he was tired, bitterly tired. If only friendly arms would assist him, lift him up out of the darkness and set him in the light. But there were no friendly arms, nothing but bare, cold walls, and stony roads and darkness.

At last, after ages and ages, the light came closer; and as he struggled into it, a

soft hand caught at his, and a sweet voice murmured, "Baby, my baby!" and he cried aloud in ecstasy, "Mother!" Then the friendly arms he had longed for gathered him up; gathered him close to a soft, motherly bosom, and soft lips tenderly caressed his hair and eyes and rosy face. But wonderingly he cried: "You are not my mother!"

"No," said the soft voice. "No, I am not your mother, but you are the baby I should have had, and God has given me the right to carry you to Him."

And he sank back in her arms, was content; and together they entered the boat which was to carry them across the stormy sea into the bright, shining light ahead.

Theodore Roosevelt as a Man of Letters

HISTORIAN, ESSAYIST, CRITIC, NATURALIST, AND JOURNALIST, HIS WRITINGS WERE THE EXPRESSION OF THE FULL LIFE AND MANY-SIDED PERSONALITY OF A GREAT AMERICAN

By Brander Matthews

THE more closely we scrutinize Theodore Roosevelt's life, and the more carefully we consider his many ventures in many totally different fields of human activity, the less likely we are to challenge the assertion that his was the most interesting career ever vouchsafed to any American—more interesting even than Benjamin Franklin's, fuller, richer, and more varied. Like Franklin, Roosevelt enjoyed life intensely. He was frank in declaring that he had been happy beyond the common lot of man; and we cannot doubt that Franklin had the same feeling.

The most obvious cause of the happiness and of the interest of these two famous men's careers is that each of them had an incessant and insatiable curiosity, which kept forcing them to push their inquiries into a heterogeny of subjects wholly unrelated one to another. "The Many-Sided Franklin" was the title which Paul Leicester Ford gave to his biography of the great Philadelphian; and Roosevelt was even more polygonal.

Like Franklin, again, Roosevelt will hold a secure place among our statesmen, our men of science, and our men of letters, demanding due appraisal by experts in statecraft, in natural science, and in literature. But they differ in that Roosevelt was an author by profession, while Franklin was an author by accident. Roosevelt had looked forward to literature as a calling, whereas Franklin produced literature only as a by-product.

Franklin never composed anything in the hope or desire for fame or for money, or even in response to a need for self-expres-

sion; what he wrote was always put forth to further a cause that he had at heart. He never published a book; and if he could return to earth, he would indubitably be surprised to discover that he held a foremost place in the histories of American literature.

Roosevelt was as distinctly a man of letters as he was a man of action. He made himself known to the public, first of all, as the historian of the American navy in the war of 1812; he followed this up with the four strenuously documented volumes of his "Winning of the West"; and amid all the multiplied activities of his later years he made leisure for the written appreciation of one or another of the books he had found to his taste.

ROOSEVELT'S JOURNALISTIC WORK

It must be admitted that in the decade which has elapsed since he left the White House his intense interest in public affairs led him to devote a large part of his energy to the consideration of the pressing problems of the hour, to topics of immediate importance, to themes of only ephemeral value, sufficient unto the day. In three or four different periodicals he served as "contributing editor"—in other words, he was a writer of signed editorials, in which he was always free to express his own views frankly and fully, without undue regard for that mysterious entity, the "policy of the paper."

These contemporary contributions to dailies and weeklies and monthlies are journalism rather than literature; and the more completely they fulfilled the purpose of the

moment the less do they demand preservation. But in these same ten years Roosevelt wrote also his two books of travel in Africa and in South America, as vivacious as they were conscientious; his alluring and self-revelatory autobiography; and his two volumes of essays and addresses, "History as Literature" and "A Book-Lover's Holidays in the Open," both of them pungent with his individuality.

It is not always—in fact, it is not often—that the accomplished man of letters has the essential equipment for journalism. He is likely to be more or less "academic," and to lack the simplicity, the singleness of purpose, the directness of statement, demanded in the discussion of the events of the moment. The editorial stands in the same relation to literature that the stump speech holds to the stately oration. The editorial, like the stump speech, aims at immediate effect; and it is privileged to be more emphatic than might be becoming in a more permanent effort. It was perhaps Roosevelt's wide experience in addressing the public from the platform which made it easier for him to qualify as a contributing editor and to master the method of the newspaper.

In his state papers and messages he had already proved that he had the gift of the winged phrase, keenly pointed and barbed to flesh itself in the memory. He had preached the doctrine of the "strenuous life" and he had expounded the policy of the "square deal." He had denounced some men as "undesirable citizens" and others as "malefactors of great wealth." And when he took up the task of journalism he was happily inspired to the minting of other memorable phrases.

There was, for example, an unforgettable felicity in his characterization of the "weasel words" that sometimes suck the life out of a phrase seemingly strong and bold. Never did he use smooth and sleek rhetoric to disguise absence or vagueness of thought. In the periodical, as on the platform, he spoke out of the fulness of his heart, after his mind had clarified his emotion so that it poured forth with crystalline lucidity. Possibly the practise of the platform, which finds a profit in iteration and reiteration, was responsible for the occasional diffuseness and redundancy in his writing for the periodical.

There was no mistaking the full intent of his own words. He knew what he meant to

say, and he knew how to say it with simple sincerity and with vigorous vivacity. His straightforwardness prevented his ever employing phrases that faced both ways and that provided rat-holes from which he might crawl out. His style was tinglingly alive; it was masculine and vascular; and it was always the style of a gentleman and a scholar. He could puncture with a rapier, and he could smash with a sledge-hammer; and if he used the latter more often than the former it was because of his forthrightness and his consuming hatred of things "unmanly, ignominious, infamous."

Journalism was young—indeed, one might say that it was still waiting to be born—when Franklin put forth his pamphlets appealing to the scattered colonies to get together, and to make common cause against the French who had let loose the Indians to harry our borders. Franklin was cannily persuasive, and made use of no drumlike words, empty, loud-sounding, and monotonous; but there burned in his pages the same pure fire of patriotism that lighted Roosevelt's more impassioned exhortations to arouse ourselves from lethargy and sloth that we might do our full duty in the war which has saved civilization from the barbarian.

Where Franklin addressed himself to common sense, Roosevelt called upon the imagination. Perhaps Franklin, as is the tendency of a practical man, a little distrusted the imagination; but Roosevelt, as practical as Franklin, had imagination himself, and he knew that the American people also have it.

It is by imagination, by the vision and the faculty divine, that now and again an occasional address, like Lincoln's at Gettysburg, or a contributed editorial, like Roosevelt's on "The Great Adventure," transcends its immediate and temporary purpose, and is lifted up to the serener heights of pure literature. It is not without intention that "The Great Adventure" has been set by the side of the Gettysburg address; they are akin, and there is in Roosevelt's paragraphs not a little of the poetic elevation and of the exalted dignity of phrase which combine to make the address a masterpiece of English prose.

Consider the opening words of "The Great Adventure" and take note of its concision, like that of a Greek inscription:

Only those are fit to live who do not fear to die, and none are fit to die who have shrunk from

the joy of life and the duty of life. Both life and death are parts of the same Great Adventure. Never yet was worthy adventure worthily carried through by the man who put his personal safety first. Never yet was a country worth living in unless its sons and daughters were of that stern stuff which bade them die for it at need; and never yet was a country worth dying for unless its sons and daughters thought of life not as something concerned only with the selfish evanescence of the individual, but as a link in the great chain of creation and causation, so that each person is seen in his true relations as an essential part of the whole, whose life must be made to serve the larger and continuing life of the whole.

Consider also these words, a little later in the same article:

If the only son who is killed at the front has no brother because his parents coldly dreaded to play their part in the Great Adventure of Life, then our sorrow is not for them, but solely for the son who himself dared the Great Adventure of Death. If, however, he is the only son because the Unseen Powers denied others to the love of his father and mother, then we mourn doubly with them, because their darling went up to the sword of Azrael, because he drank the dark drink proffered by the Death Angel.

HIS STYLE AND LITERARY TASTE

Roosevelt's style is firm and succulent; and its excellence is due to his having learned the lesson of the masters of English. He wrote well because he had read widely and deeply, because he had absorbed good literature for the sheer delight he took in it. Consciously or unconsciously he enriched his vocabulary, accumulating a store of strong words which he made flexible, bending them to do his bidding. But he was never bookish in his diction; he never went in quest of recondite vocables, because his taste was refined, and because he was ever seeking to be "understood of the people."

Like Lord Morley, he had little of the verbal curiosity condemned by Milton as toilsome vanity, and he was ready, with Montaigne, to laugh "at fools who will go a quarter of a league to run after a fine word." He never indulged in fine words, suspecting their sincerity as we all suspect the sincerity of what is called "fine writing"—often only the written equivalent of "tall talk."

To him life was more important than literature, and what he was forever seeking to put into his literature was life itself. He was a nature-lover, but what he loved best was human nature. Yet his relish for life was scarcely keener than his relish for literature. We may think of him as preeminently an outdoor man, and such he was, of

course; but he was also an indoor man—a denizen of the library, as he was an explorer of the forest. Indoors and out of doors he was forever reading; and he could not venture into the wilds of Africa in search of big game without taking along with him the volumes of the "pigskin library," which testified at once to the persistence and to the diversity of his tastes as a reader.

He devoured books voraciously—all sorts of books, old and new, established classics and evanescent "best-sellers," history and fiction, poetry and criticism, travels on land and voyages by sea. To use an apt phrase of Dr. Holmes, he was at home with books "as a stable-boy is with horses." He might have echoed Lowell's declaration that he was "a bookman." The title of one of his more recent collections of essays is revelatory of his attitude toward himself—"A Book-Lover's Holidays in the Open," for even when he went into the open he wanted to have a book within reach.

Of course, he enjoyed certain books, and certain kinds of books better than others. Of all Shakespeare's tragedies he best liked the martial "Macbeth," preferring it to the more introspective "Hamlet." He was not unlike the lad who was laid up, and whose mother proposed to read the Bible to him, whereupon he asked her to pick out "the fightingest parts."

Roosevelt had a special regard for the masculine writers—for Malory, especially, holding the "Morte d'Arthur" to be a better piece of work than the more delicate and decorated "Idyls of the King" which Tennyson made out of it. In fact, Roosevelt once went so far as to dismiss Tennyson's effeminate transpositions as "tales of blameless curates clad in tin-mail."

He enjoyed writing as much as he did reading; and as a result his works go far to fill a five-foot shelf of their own. When the man of action that he was had been out in search of new experiences and in the hunt for new knowledge, the man of letters that he also was impelled him to lose no time in setting down the story of his wanderings, that others might share in the pleasure of his adventure without undergoing its perils.

Being a normal human being, he liked to celebrate himself and to be his own Boswell; but he was never vain or conceited in his record of his own sayings and doings. He had the saving sense of humor, and he de-

lighted in nothing more than to tell a tale against himself. He was not self-conscious or thin-skinned; and he laughed as heartily as any one when *Mr. Dooley* pretended to mistake the title of his account of the work of the Rough Riders, calling it "Alone in Cuba."

Perhaps it was because he was so abundantly gifted with the sense of humor that he had a shrewd insight into character, and could delineate it incisively by the aid of a single significant anecdote. In sketching the many strange creatures with whom he was associated in the Far West, in South America, and in Africa, he showed that he had the kodak eye of the born reporter.

So it is that he gave us the two delightful volumes for which he drew upon his experiences as a rancher in the West, the stirring book devoted to the deeds of his dearly beloved Rough Riders, whom he was forever recalling as "my regiment," and the solid tomes in which he set down the story of his trips as a faunal naturalist in Africa and in South America. They are all books pulsing with life, vibrating with vitality, and they are all books unfailingly interesting to the reader, because whatever is narrated in them has been unfailingly interesting to the writer.

Walter Bagehot once suggested that the reason why there are so few really good books, out of all the immense multitude that pour forth from the press, is that the men who have seen things and done things cannot write, whereas the men who can write have rarely done anything or seen anything. Roosevelt's adventure books are really good, because after having seen many things and done many things he could write about them so vividly and so sharply as to make his readers see them.

Perhaps the "Autobiography" ought to be classed with the earlier adventure books, since they also were autobiographic. It is a candid book; it puts before us the man himself as reflected in his own mirror; but it is not complete, since it was composed, not in the retrospective serenity of old age, but while the autobiographer was still in the thick of the fight, compelled to silence about many of the events of his career which we should like to see elucidated.

It was published serially month by month; and perhaps because of the pressure under which it was undertaken it seems to have a vague air of improvisation, as if it had not been as solidly thought out and as

cautiously written as one or another of the earlier books—the "Hunting Trips of a Ranchman," for example, or the "Rough Riders." But it abides as a human document, and it explains why the autobiographer's buoyant personality appealed so intimately to the American people.

HIS WORK AS A CONSTRUCTIVE THINKER

"A Book-Lover's Holidays in the Open" contains two characteristic essays, both of them delightful in their zest and in their individuality. One is on "Books for Holidays in the Open"; the other is about the author's "Wild Hunting Companions"—a searching and sympathetic appreciation of the human types developed by the wild life of the lessening wild places still uninvaded by advancing civilization.

In "History as Literature, and Other Essays," there are other papers as characteristic and as attractive. Three of them are the addresses which he delivered, on his triumphant return from his African rambles, at the universities of Oxford and Berlin and at the Sorbonne in Paris. They represent the high-water mark of his work as a constructive thinker. They are the lofty and dignified utterances of a statesman who was a practical politician of immense experience in the conduct of public affairs, and who was also a man of letters ambitious to present worthily the results of his experience and of his meditation.

These disquisitions on themes seemingly so remote from his special fields of activity as "The Biological Analogies of History," for example, have been described as daring; and in fact they are daring. But they justify themselves, since they disclose Roosevelt's possession of the assimilated information and the interpreting imagination which could survey the whole field of history, past and present, using the present to illuminate the past and the past as a beacon to the present, and calling upon natural history to shed light upon the evolution of human history.

These addresses are representative of Roosevelt when he chose to indulge himself in historic speculation; and in the same volume there is an essay, less ambitious, but highly individual in theme and in treatment, and quite as representative as its stately companions. This is the discussion, at once scholarly and playful, of "Dante in the Bowery"—a paper which could have been written only by a lover of lofty poetry

who had been a practical politician in New York.

To Roosevelt, Dante's mighty vision is not a frigid classic demanding formal lip-service and lending itself to destructive analysis; it is a living poem with a voice as warm as if it had been born only yesterday. To him the figures who pass along Dante's pages are not graven images, tagged with explanatory foot-notes; they are human beings like unto us, the men of today and of New York.

Thus it is that Roosevelt is led to dwell on the unaffectedness with which Dante dares to be of his own town and of his own time, and the simplicity with which Dante, wishing to assail those guilty of crimes of violence, mentions in one stanza Attila and in the next two local highway-men "by no means as important as Jesse James and Billy the Kid"—less formidable as fighting men, and with adventures less startling and less varied. Roosevelt called attention to the fact that—

Of all the poets of the nineteenth century, Walt Whitman was the only one who dared to use the Bowery—that is, to use anything that was striking and vividly typical of the humanity around him—as Dante used the ordinary humanity of his day; and even Whitman was not quite natural in doing so, for he always felt that he was defying the conventions and prejudices of his neighbors; and his self-consciousness made him a little defiant.

Dante felt free to use the local present as unconsciously as he used the universal past; and the essayist asks why it is that to us moderns in the twentieth century it seems improper, and indeed ludicrous, to illustrate human nature by examples chosen alike from Castle Garden and the Piræus, "from Tammany and the Roman mob organized by the foes or friends of Cæsar. To Dante such feeling itself would have been inexplicable."

ROOSEVELT'S MOST ENDURING WORK

Varied and brilliant as were Roosevelt's contributions to other departments of literature, it is more than probable that his ultimate reputation as a man of letters will most securely rest upon his stern labors as a historian—not on the brisk and lively little book on New York that he contributed to Freeman's "Historic Towns" series, not on the biographies of Benton and Gouverneur Morris that he wrote for the "American Statesmen" series, not on the shrewd and sympathetic life of Cromwell, not on

the stirring and picturesque "Hero Tales of American History," which he prepared in collaboration with Henry Cabot Lodge, but on the four stately tomes of his most energetic and ambitious undertaking, the story of "The Winning of the West," which he began early in his manhood, and which he was always hoping to carry further.

Macaulay once praised the work of one of his contemporaries because it exhibited the most valuable qualities of the historian—"perspicuousness, conciseness, great diligence in examining authorities, great judgment in weighing testimony, and great impartiality in estimating characters"; and no competent reader of "The Winning of the West" could fail to find all these qualities in its pages.

A later historian, Professor Morse Stephens, set up four tests for the valuation of historical writing:

First, the modern historian must have "conscientiously mastered all the documents relating to his period at first hand."

Secondly, he must appreciate all accessible primary material "with careful weighing of evidence and trained faculty of judgment."

Thirdly, he must possess absolute impartiality, "in intention as well as in act."

Fourthly, he must also possess "the one necessary feature of literary style" in a history—"clearness of statement."

And "The Winning of the West" can withstand the application of all four of these tests. In other words, it is scientific in the collection and comparison and analysis of the accessible facts, and it is artistic in its presentation to the reader of the results of the writer's indefatigable research.

As "The Winning of the West" was written by Roosevelt it could not help being readable, every chapter and every page alive and alert with his own forceful and enthusiastic personality. This readability is not attained by any facile eloquence or any glitter of rhetoric—although it has passages, and not a few of them, which linger in the memory because of their felicitous phrasing. The book is abidingly readable because it is the result of deliberate literary art employed to present honestly the result of honest, scientific inquiry. This is Roosevelt's sterling virtue as a historian, and it was fitly acknowledged by his fellow workers in this field when they elected him to the presidency of the American Historical Association.

In an evaluation of the final volumes of Parkman's fascinating record of the fateful struggle between the French and the English for the control of North America—an article written in 1892, while that great historian was still living—Roosevelt remarked that "modern historians always lay great stress upon visiting the places where the events they described occurred." He commented that although this is advisable, it is less important than the acquisition of an intimate acquaintance "with the people and the life described." Then he said:

It is precisely this experience which Mr. Parkman has had, and which renders his work so especially valuable. He knows the Indian character and the character of the white frontiersman, by personal observation as well as by books; neither knowledge by itself being of much value for a historian. In consequence he writes with a clear and keen understanding of the conditions.

Roosevelt himself had the clear and keen understanding of conditions with which he credited Parkman, in whose footsteps he was following, since "The Winning of the West" may be called a continuation of "France and England in North America." Like Parkman, Roosevelt was a severely trained scientific investigator, who was also a born story-teller. If the historian is only an investigator, the result is likely to be a justification of the old gibe which defined history as "an arid region abounding in dates"; and if he is only a story-teller his narrative will speedily disintegrate.

"The true historian," Roosevelt asserted in "History as Literature," his presidential address to the American Historical Association, "will bring the past before our eyes as if it were the present. He will make us see as living men the hard-faced archers of Agincourt, and the war-worn spearmen who followed Alexander down beyond the rim of the known world. We shall hear grate on the coast of Britain the keels of

the Low Dutch sea-thieves whose children's children were to inherit unknown continents. . . . We shall see conquerors riding forward to victories that have changed the course of time. . . . We shall see the terrible horsemen of Timur the Lame ride over the roof of the world; we shall hear the drums beat as the armies of Gustavus and Frederick and Napoleon drive forward to victory. . . . We shall see the glory of triumphant violence and the revel of those who do wrong in high places; and the broken-hearted despair that lies beneath the glory and the revel. We shall also see the supreme righteousness of the wars for freedom and justice, and know that the men who fell in those wars made all mankind their debtors."

A FINE AND CHARACTERISTIC PASSAGE

At the end of the foreword to "A Book-Lover's Holidays" there is a noble passage which calls for quotation here as an example of Roosevelt's command of nervous English, measured and cadenced. It is proposed in proof of the assertion that the joy of living is his who has the heart to demand it:

The beauty and charm of the wilderness are his for the asking, for the edges of the wilderness lie close beside the beaten roads of present travel. He can see the red splendor of desert sunsets, and the unearthly glory of the afterglow on the battlements of desolate mountains. In sapphire gulfs of ocean he can visit islets, above which the wings of myriads of sea-fowl make a kind of shifting cuneiform script in the air. He can ride along the brink of the stupendous cliff-walled cañon, where eagles soar below him, and cougars make their lairs on the ledges and harry the big-horned sheep. He can journey through the northern forests, the home of the giant moose, the forests of fragrant and murmuring life in summer, the iron-bound and melancholy forests of winter.

Theodore Roosevelt had the heart to demand it, and the joy of living was his.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

October 27, 1858—January 6, 1919

The stalwart hands with firmness fraught,
The brain that throbbed with virile thought,
The patriot heart, true to the last,
Have gone into the silence vast;
And yet they leave a path of light
Across the darkness of the night—
The threefold light of sword and pen
And the strong leadership of men.

William Hamilton Hayne

Renunciation

BY ACHMED ABDULLAH

Author of "The Blue-Eyed Manchu," etc.

WHEN she came to him that night, forty-eight hours before he sailed for France with his battalion on democracy's greatest, most splendid adventure, she did so of her own free will. For he had not seen her; he had not written to her; he had even tried not to think of her since that shimmering, pink-and-lavender morning of early June, two years earlier, when, in rose point lace and orange-blossoms, she had walked up the aisle of St. Thomas's Church and had become the wife of Dan Coolidge.

Her low, trembling "I will!" had sounded the death-knell of Roger Kenyon's tempestuous youth. He had plucked her from his heart, had uprooted her from his mind, from his smoldering, subconscious passion had cast the memory of her pale, pure oval of a face to the limbo of visions that must be forgotten.

It seemed strange that he could do so; for Roger had always been a hot-blooded, virile, inconsiderate man who rode life as he rode a horse, with a loose rein, a straight bit, and rowel-spurs. He had always had a head-strong tendency to hurdle with tense, savage joy across the obstacles he encountered—which were of his own making as often as not. He had been in the habit of taking whatever sensations and emotions he could—until he had met Josephine Erskine up there in that sleepy, drab New England village where, for a generation or two, her people had endeavored to impose upon the world with a labored, pathetic, meretricious gentility.

Heretofore, woman had meant nothing to him except a charming manifestation of sex. Then suddenly, like a sweet, swift throe, love had come to him in Josephine's brown, gold-flecked eyes and crimson mouth. He had told her so quite simply as they walked in the rose-garden; but she had shaken her head.

"No, Roger," she had replied.

"Why not?"

"I do not love you."

She told him that she was going to become the wife, for better or for worse, of Dan Coolidge, a college chum of his—a mild, bald-headed, paunchy, stock-broking chap with a steam-yacht, a garage full of imported, low-slung motor-cars, a red-brick-and-white-woodwork house on the conservative side of Eleventh Street, a few doors from Fifth Avenue, a place in Westchester County at exactly the correct distance between suburbia and yokeldom; four servants, including a French—not an English—butler; and a mother who dressed in black bombazine and bugles.

"Yes," she had said in a weak, wiped-over voice, "I am going to marry Dan."

"Because you love him—and because you don't love me?"

"Yes, Roger!"

He had laughed—a cracked, high-pitched laugh that had twisted his dark, handsome face into a sardonic mask.

"You lie, my dear," he had replied brutally, and when she gasped and blushed he had continued: "You lie—and you *know* you do! You love—*me*! I can feel it in my heart, my soul, in every last fiber and cell of my being. I can feel it waking and sleeping. Your love is mine, quite mine—a thing both definite and infinite. You don't love Dan!"

"But—"

"I tell you why you're going to marry him. It's because he has money, and I have no financial prospects except a couple of up-State aunts who are tough and stringy, and who have made up their minds to survive me, whatever happens."

"I must think of mother and the girls," had come her stammered admission through a blurred veil of hot tears; "and Fred—he must go to Harvard—"

"Right! You have your mother, and the girls, and Fred, and the rest of your

family, and they'll all live on Dan's bounty and on the sacrifice you're making of yourself—not to mention myself!"

Then, after a pause, taking her by both her slender shoulders, he went on:

"I could make love to you now, my dear. I could crush you in my arms—and you'd marry Dan afterward, and somehow strike a compromise between your inbred, atavistic Mayflower Puritanism and the resolute Greek paganism which is making your mouth so red. But"—as she swayed and trembled—"I won't! I'm going to play the game!"

She said nothing. He laughed and spoke again:

"Confound it! You can put your foot on every decency, on every bully, splendid emotion, on the blessed decalogue itself—as long as you play the game!"

So he had gone away, after being Dan's best man, to his little plantation in South Carolina. For two years he had not seen her, had not written to her, had even tried not to think of her—

And there she stood—now—on the threshold of his room in the discreet little hotel where he had put up, with a grinning, plump boy in buttons, his hand well weighted with money, winking as if to say:

"It's O. K., boss. I'm goin' to keep mum, all right, all right!"

Then the boy closed the door, and the bolt snapped into the lock with a little steely, jeering click of finality.

II

SHE WAS dressed in white from head to foot; only her lips were red, and the long-stemmed Gloire de Dijon rose that she held in her hand. She spoke in a matter-of-fact voice, as if continuing a conversation that had been interrupted just for a second by the entry of a servant or the postman's whistle:

"Don't you see, Roger? I had to come. I had to say good-by to you—before you sail for France!"

He did not move from where he stood between the two windows, with the moonlight drifting across his shoulders into the dim, prosy hotel room, and weaving a fantastic pattern into the threadbare carpet. There was surprise in his accents, and a keen, peremptory challenge.

"How did you know that I was booked to sail? Our orders are secret. I am here on a special mission until the day after to-

morrow—incognito, at that. Josephine, how did you find me out? Who told you that I was here?"

She smiled.

"Of course I knew, dear. How could I help knowing?"

Suddenly, strangely, the explanation—what there was of it—seemed lucid and satisfactory and reasonable, and he crossed the room and bowed over her hand. He took the rose from her narrow, white fingers and inhaled its heavy, honeyed fragrance.

"A rose from your garden!" He heard his own voice coming in an odd murmur. "From your garden up there in the little New England village!"

"Yes, Roger."

"Did your mother send it to you?"

"No, I picked it myself. It kept fresh, didn't it, Roger dear?"

"Yes."

He remembered the garden where they had walked side by side, two years earlier—where he had told her of his love. It was the one splotch of color, the one sign of the joy of life, in the whole drab Massachusetts community, this old garden which the Erskine family had jealously nursed and coddled for generations. It was a mass of roses, creepers as well as bushes, scrambling and straining and growing and tangling in their own strong-willed fashion, clothing old stones with hearts of deep ruby and amethyst, building arches of glowing pink and tea-yellow against the pale sky, lifting shy, single, dewy heads in hushed corners, as if praying.

But he had always liked the scarlet Gloire de Dijon roses best. They were like her lips.

III

He looked up.

"What about Dan?" he asked.

"Oh, Danny—" She smiled.

"He is my friend, and your husband. If he knew—"

"Danny won't mind, dear," she said.

Her words carried conviction. Somehow he knew that Dan wouldn't mind. He sat down on the hard couch that faced the windows, drew her down beside him, and put his arm around her shoulder. Her hand, which sought and found his, was very steady and very cool.

He did not speak; neither did she. Twisting his head sidewise, he looked at her. She was in shadow from the shoulder

downward. Only her face was sharply defined in the moonlight. The scarlet lips seemed to swim to him along the slanting, glistening rays, and he leaned over.

There was hunger in his soul, in his mind, in his heart, in his body.

"I am going to play the game!"

The words came from very far, from across the bitter bridge of years, with the jarring, dissonant shock of a forgotten reproach.

"Dear, dear heart!" he whispered.

She did not resist. She did not draw back; nor did she say a word. Only, just as his lips were about to touch hers, something—"an immense, invisible, and very sad presence," he described it afterward—seemed to creep into the room with a huge whirring of wings.

The whirring was soundless; but he felt the sharp displacement of the air as the pinions cut through it, the left tip resting on the farther window-sill, the right on a chair near the bed, on which he had thrown his khaki overcoat and his campaign hat.

With the whirring came a sense of unutterable peace and sweetness, strangely flavored with a great pain. As he leaned back without having touched her lips, the pain was mysteriously transmuted. It became a realization, not a vision, of color—clear, deep scarlet with a faint golden glow in the center. Then began to assume a definite form—that of a gigantic Gloire de Dijon rose, which, as he watched, slowly shrank to its natural proportions until it rested, velvety, scented, where he had dropped it among the books on his writing-desk.

He rose to pick it up. When he turned

back again, he saw that she had left the couch and was standing on the threshold of the open door, a blotch of filmy, gauzy white.

She was gone before he could rush to her side. When he tried to cross the threshold, to run after her, he felt again the whirring of wings, which brought with it a sense of ineffable sweetness and peace, and which enveloped his subconscious self in a rush of blind delight.

IV

It was Captain Donaldson of his regiment who startled him out of his sleep early the next morning.

"Hurry up, old man!" he said. "The transport sails this afternoon instead of tomorrow."

Roger Kenyon tumbled out of bed and walked over to the desk where he had dropped the rose the night before.

"What are you looking for?" asked his friend. "A cigarette? Here—have one of mine!"

"No, no. I thought I had left a rose here last night—a scarlet Gloire de Dijon rose; but—"

"Gallant adventure, eh?" laughed Donaldson. "Say, you must have been drinking! Why, this isn't a rose—it's a white lily!"

He picked up the stiff, sweet-scented flower.

"By the way," asked Donaldson, facing his friend over coffee and toast and eggs, "have you heard that Danny Coolidge's wife died last night?"

"Yes," replied Roger Kenyon.

FLOWER OF BEAUTY

Oh, flower of beauty, bloom
Within my garden walls!
Light up the paths of gloom;
Shine where the darkness falls.

Oh, flower of beauty, I
Am crying for your light;
My garden walls are high,
And hold the helpless night,

As helpless as my soul
That lies within its gloom.
Now may the seed unroll—
Oh, flower of beauty, bloom!

Edwin Justus Mayer

The Coming Back of Oscar Wilde

AMID THE EPHEMERAL FROTH OF THE LATTER-DAY STAGE, REVIVALS OF THE BRILLIANT IRISHMAN'S STERLING WORK HAVE STRUCK AN IMPRESSIVE NOTE

By Richard Le Gallienne

OUR greatest authority on human nature has told us that "the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." The same philosopher has also admonished us that "there is a soul of goodness in things evil."

These aphorisms have a particular application to the case of Oscar Wilde, and they very naturally sprang to my mind of late as I listened, with great interest and some surprise, to a comment made, apropos of the recent revival of Wilde's comedy, "An Ideal Husband," by one of America's most famous business men. He had been to see that play a few evenings before, and though it was of course by no means his first acquaintance with its author, he had come away from it so reasonfished, so to speak, at the soundness and brilliance of Wilde's intellect that he paid it, impromptu, a tribute which Wilde would have valued beyond any number of "esthetic" appreciations.

Intellect is always appreciated by intellect, however various and apparently remote from one another the fields in which it operates. Intellect is like electricity in that respect—capable of doing all kinds of work, but always "capable." The intellect of a Coleridge and a Napoleon, though superficially different, is essentially one, and a great poet and a great business man are much nearer to each other than they usually suppose.

The essence of intellect is what we call practicality. Beyond all other qualities it has clear sight, and, after that, the power to apply that clear sight to action of whatever kind—all real writing being a form of action. It is the greatest of all Oscar Wilde's surprises, his supreme paradox,

that he whose earliest notoriety was that of a sort of effeminate artistic buffoon, masquerading with sunflowers and knee-breeches, should be more and more recognized for one of the keenest intellects of our time, and one of its great spiritual influences.

"Can Oscar Wilde come back?" asked my captain of industry, and, after his manner, answered his own question. "He has come back—that night at 'An Ideal Husband' proved it to me."

Curiously enough, some years ago I had heard a like comment—identical, indeed, in its meaning—from an English business man, who, one would have said, was the last to appreciate the curled fop in Regency costume, with high stock and so forth, but with a beautiful voice and an evident humorous eye on his own masquerade, who was lecturing to us on his "Impressions of America."

"That man is no fool," said the English business man, "though he does his best to behave like one." As the lecture ended, and we sought our coats and hats, he added: "I haven't heard so much common sense in a long time."

That was long ago, not far from the beginning of Wilde's momentous, tragic, and much misunderstood career. At that time he had written nothing beyond his first volume of poems. The insight of that English business man is therefore the more remarkable. Linked up with the comment of the American business man which is the occasion of this article, it makes an appreciation which, more than any, would have appealed to Wilde's intensely practical mind.

For it has been not the least of Wilde's misfortunes that he has been posthumously appropriated for their own by an unpleasant rag-tag and bobtail of literary and artistic failures and *poseurs*, would-be "decadents" and "degenerates," not to speak of those "biographers" who, as Wilde once said, "always go in with the undertaker." These undesirable parasites, "maggots in the decay of the divine," knew nothing of Wilde's strength. It has been their unsavory trade to traffic in his weakness. They knew nothing of his profound intellectual and spiritual health. Their only care was to note and exaggerate the marks of decay in a noble mind.

It goes without saying that his cleansing humor and his drastic, purifying wit—wit like a surgeon's knife—are as little their affair as his innocent fairy tales and his profound meditations on "The Soul of Man under Socialism." Like flies on carrion, these vermin on a great mind love best to feast on the morbidity of his "Salome"—missing what is really fine and significant even in that uncharacteristic and imitative play—or on the merely Corinthian elements of "Dorian Gray." The Wilde they are alone interested in—and him, too, they misunderstand—was the whimsical worldling who loved to scandalize the respectable middle-class English mind with talk of "strange sins" and "purple passions." Only moping intellectual perverts could take such talk seriously. With Wilde it was merely "for fun," and as much a joke on his "disciples" as on the respectable middle-class mind.

Wilde had too much brain to take evil seriously. His writings show that he was more interested in goodness, from an intellectual point of view, as being a greater mystery than evil. And there is nothing more surprising in his complex nature than the way in which sophistication and simplicity are found together, and even harmonized. He was, of course, thinking of this seeming incongruity in his own make-up when he wrote "simplicity is the last refuge of the complex," thus saying, as his method always was, a serious thing in an apparently trivial way.

This persistent humorous disguise of his real intellectual and spiritual self is not unnaturally misleading, and has caused him to be misunderstood; though, in the end, as he doubtless intended, it has made the serious side of him the more effective. For

the modern world looks askance on prosing moralists, suspecting them of being either professionals or hypocrites, and has little faith in any truth that cannot face the test of laughter.

WILDE'S PRAISE OF "JOHN HALIFAX"

If one were to take Wilde as his "biographers" and those "sedulous apes," his very poor imitators, would have us do, we should think of him as caring for nothing but the "poison-honey" of certain forms of French literature—Baudelaire's "Fleurs du Mal," Huysmans's "À Rebours," Flaubert's "Salammbô" and "La Tentation de St. Antoine." Of course, these great writers had their influence upon him, as they have influenced all writers who have come after them; but it will, I think, be a surprise to many readers of Oscar Wilde that, much as he admired Baudelaire's "Fleurs du Mal," he was also an admirer of "John Halifax, Gentleman." There is a stretching of the octave of which few men in our time have been capable, and I think that no more significant evidence could be brought, not merely of his intellectual many-sidedness, but of the remarkable inclusiveness of his humanity.

I owe my knowledge of this evidence to the enthusiasm of one of Wilde's American publishers, Mr. H. S. Nichols, who, in his edition of Wilde's writings, has included the reviews and other contributions which Wilde made to the *Woman's World*, an English monthly magazine which he edited while he was marking time, and needing money, between his lecture tour in this country and his début as the author of "Lady Windermere's Fan." The reprinting of every fugitive scrap of a writer's work is seldom to be commended, but in this case Mr. Nichols is fully justified. Not to have known Wilde's opinion of "John Halifax, Gentleman," would have been to miss a most important document toward the complete understanding of his strange mentality.

Who, indeed, could have supposed that the novelist of "Dorian Gray," the dramatist of "Salome," the poet of "The Sphinx," could have felt as he did about Mrs. Craik and her famous masterpiece? On the occasion of her death, Wilde wrote:

Mrs. Craik will live long in the affectionate memory of all who knew her, and one of her novels, at any rate, will always have a high and honorable place in English fiction. Indeed, for

simple narrative power, some of the chapters of "John Halifax, Gentleman," are almost unequalled in prose literature.

At the very beginning of his career, however, in his first volume of "Poems," published soon after his leaving Oxford, he had unmistakably shown his devotion to the great sane and central masters of English poetry. This volume, at the time of its publication, and since, has been decried as a mere collection of echoes. It is perhaps more imitative than is usual with a young poet's first volume, but it is more importantly true to say that the "imitations" give evidence of an original poetic gift such as has seldom been found in the imitative juvenilia of other poets. In our day Wilde is not the only writer who has combined imitation with originality; and his early poems are "imitations" that could only have been made by a strong, original mind.

THE QUALITY OF WILDE'S EARLY VERSE

In the matter of imitation, too, much depends on the models that the young writer chooses to imitate; and it was certainly significant, and of good omen, that Wilde, while echoing Keats and Swinburne, as was to be expected, was evidently much more under the influence of such austerer poets as Milton, Wordsworth, and Matthew Arnold. Indeed, throughout all his writing to the end, such bracing influences as theirs are always present. The stern marble masters of Greece and Rome, and those in modern literature who have most been modeled upon their style and vitalized by their spirit—these, with the Bible and Shakespeare, were always the sustaining influences behind all Wilde's intellectual vagaries and excursions into the exotic and the bizarre. It was because he had such a firm hold on Homer and Plato and Shakespeare, on the eternal humanities and on the eternal verities, too, that Wilde was able to give to his rôles of dandy and society fool so arresting a significance.

Of course, I do not mean to imply that he was merely a moralist in disguise—like his much more single-minded countryman, Bernard Shaw. Indeed, I do not think that he was anything "on purpose," but, on the contrary, many things by the accident of nature—a manifold genius expressing an unusually complicated individuality with a necessary variety of method.

At Oxford he made some reputation for his scholarship, particularly for his Greek.

He was already known, too, for his gift of fantastic conversation, and for his love of those beautiful accessories of life, old furniture, tapestries, china, and so forth, which was expressed in his traditional *mot* of aspiration to live up to his blue china, and was afterward to find flamboyant expression in the cult of the sunflower and "the esthetic movement." He was also known as a poet, if the winning of the Newdigate at Oxford can be said to confer that distinction. It was as a poet that, after leaving college, he made his bow to that London society of which he was later to be so easy a conqueror and so tragic a victim.

The first poem in that first volume of "Poems, by Oscar Wilde, London, 1881," seems, as we look back, to have had an ominous and pathetic significance. I quote it both on that account and because it is a striking sonnet. Incidentally, too, I may draw attention to Wilde's knowledge of the Bible shown in the twelfth and thirteenth lines:

. . . Lo, with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance.

I think that very few of his commentators could give chapter and verse for that Scriptural reference. But here is the sonnet, entitled, "Helas!"

To drift with every passion till my soul
Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play,
Is it for this that I have given away
Mine ancient wisdom and austere control?
Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday
With idle songs for pipe and vielay,
Which do not mar the secret of the whole.
Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God.
Is that time dead? Lo, with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance—
And must I lose a soul's inheritance?

Imitative or not, this first volume of poems was full of strength and beauty, and still vibrates with youthful vitality. I have no space to quote from its more serious poems, but this "Requiescat," in its exquisite tenderness, casts a significant sidelight on the nature of the young "esthete":

Tread lightly, she is near
Under the snow;
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lilylike, white as snow,
 She hardly knew
 She was a woman, so
 Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
 Lie on her breast.
 I vex my heart alone—
 She is at rest.

I have heard that it was a loved sister whom Wilde thus pathetically mourns; and in connection with this early volume, another tender little poem has recently been reprinted from the copy in which he inscribed it to his wife:

I can write no stately poem
 As a prelude to my lay;
 From a poet to a poem,
 I would dare to say.

For if of these fallen petals
 One to you seem fair,
 Love will waft it till it settles
 On your hair.

And when wind and winter harden
 All the loveless land,
 It will whisper of the garden—
 You will understand.

Wilde's early poems were received, I may say, with that unintelligent contumely with which London reviewers—usually young Oxford graduates of good but poor connections, for whom somehow or other a living must be found—are accustomed to welcome Englishmen of genius. With his practical good sense and instinct for "direct action," Wilde now determined to give his belief in beauty an effective advertisement. Ruskin, William Morris, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti had already begun their crusade against Victorian Philistinism, horse-hair sofas, wax fruit under glass, antimacassars, and all the horrible "decorations" of the period. William Morris, in particular, had begun the reform by the manufacture of beautiful pottery for household needs, not to speak of those famous chairs which have gone all over the world, and which are, it it to be feared, far better known than Morris's poetry. But the ideas of these quiet philosophers, painters, and craftsmen might very well have influenced only a small circle had it not been for that flamboyant young Irishman from Oxford—Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde—who suddenly had the courage—and it must have needed no little—to—

Walk down Piccadilly
 With a sunflower or a lily
 In his medieval hand.

Thus Oscar Wilde became the "apostle of beauty" to the Philistines, and if our houses and general surroundings are more beautiful to-day, we owe it, if you like, to his fearless impudence, to his willingness to play the fool in a good cause—but always, let us not forget, for the fun of it.

WILDE'S LECTURE TOUR IN AMERICA

The English institution called *Punch* played Wilde's game for him, by the spiteful and quite stupid caricature of the esthete *Postlethwaite*. Then Gilbert and Sullivan came more genially to his assistance with their immortal "Patience," as a result of which—some say as an involuntary, innocent advertisement—Oscar Wilde came on his famous lecture tour to America.

As he stepped off the boat in New York, long-haired and fur-coated, he made two of his most famous epigrams. To the reporters he confessed himself "disappointed with the Atlantic," and to the custom-house officers he declared that he had "nothing to declare—but his genius." Then he went forth to lecture America on "The English Renaissance of Art," giving the lecture so entitled for the first time in Chickering Hall, New York, on January 9, 1882. He repeated it in many other American towns, and lectured on "House Decoration," "Art and the Handicraftsman," and "What Makes an Artist?"

On his return to England, Wilde toured the provinces with his lecture "Impressions of America," to which I have already referred. Of course, as was natural, he could not resist poking a little fun here and there, but for the most part his impressions were surprisingly sympathetic and understanding. It is interesting to compare Wilde's evidently sincere pleasure in America with the bitterness of Dickens's "American Notes," and even certain early observations by Rudyard Kipling.

America certainly understood Wilde far better in those days than England did—perhaps from the fact that, being a nation of "jolliers," it soon "got on" to the fact that behind his posturings he was a "jollier," too. Moreover, he surprised America by a frank admiration of so much that no one expected to see him admire—American machinery, for example. Here are a few sentences from his lecture:

There is no country in the world where machinery is so lovely as in America. I have always

wished to believe that the line of strength and the line of beauty are one. That wish was realized when I contemplated American machinery. It was not until I had seen the water-works at Chicago that I realized the wonders of machinery; the rise and fall of the steel rods, the symmetrical motion of great wheels, is the most beautifully rhythmic thing I have ever seen.

I was disappointed with Niagara—most people must be disappointed with Niagara. Every American bride is taken there, and the sight of the stupendous waterfall must be one of the earliest, if not the keenest, disappointments in American married life. One sees it under bad conditions, very far away, the point of view not showing the splendor of the water.

It is a popular superstition that in America a visitor is invariably addressed as "stranger." I was never addressed as "stranger." When I went to Texas I was called "captain"; when I got to the center of the country I was addressed as "colonel," and on arriving at the borders of Mexico, as "general." On the whole, however, "sir," the old English method of addressing people, is the most common.

Soon after his return to England, Oscar Wilde married Miss Constance Lloyd, and, with that boyish love of playing a part which was behind so much of his misunderstood posing, took up the rôle of husband and father with much show of gravity. He cut his ambrosial locks, discarded his knee-breeches, and suddenly, one morning, London society was startled by the apparition of "our only Oscar" with short, smooth hair, and appareled in the usual garb of the modish man about town. Soon, for the sunflower, he was to display the famous green carnation in his buttonhole.

WILDE'S FAIRY TALES AND ESSAYS

Meanwhile he seriously set himself down to earning his living as the editor of the *Woman's World*, and to playing with his children and telling them stories with his beautiful and elaborately modulated voice. His first volume of fairy tales, "The Happy Prince, and Other Tales" (1888), is the memorial of this tranquil and idyllic period of his life. These stories well illustrate the chameleon quality of his nature and his literary gift; for they are as child-hearted as the stories of Hans Andersen, and written in the simplest words and most unaffected style.

They are filled, too, with that sense of pity for human suffering, particularly the suffering of the poor, which he never lost even in his most artificial period—a sense which is one of many characteristics that sharply distinguish him from his imitators. Such stories as "The Happy Prince" and

"The Selfish Giant"—to which one may add "The Young King," from his later and more elaborately wrought volume, "The House of Pomegranates"—will remain while English lasts as touching contributions to the literature of pity. The moral of "The Young King," in particular, shows with what a sympathetic eye this intellectual dandy looked upon those who do the hard and dreary work of the world, and support that superstructure of society which he loved at once to satirize and to amuse.

Three nights before his coronation the young king has three dreams, in which he sees the weaver wearily weaving his coronation robe; the diver, with blood gushing from his ears and nostrils, as he brings up a great pearl from the sea which is to be set in his scepter; and a multitude of men toiling in the bed of a dried-up river to find rubies for his crown. The dreams impress him so much that at his coronation he refuses to wear or carry these insignia of his office.

"Shall Joy wear what Grief has fashioned?" he asks the old bishop who is waiting to crown him—and in that simple phrase, how, as with a sword, he smites through to the heart of the selfish materialism of modern society!

He was to develop that same theme later in an essay which perhaps remains the greatest surprise and enigma of his career, "The Soul of Man under Socialism." Meanwhile, he almost immediately followed up his fairy tales with a romance that was certainly as far removed from them in spirit as possible—the exotic, cynical, and gruesomely tragic romance of "The Picture of Dorian Gray" (1890). The power of this story is undeniable, and its moral is scarcely less shuddering than that of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." There is much beauty in the book, too; but its atmosphere breathes evil, and the sweetness throughout is sinister. However, that was necessary to the story, and an element of refreshment is to be found in its brilliant conversations. In these Wilde first came definitely before the public as the wit who had long been known in London society.

"The man," says one of his characters, "who can dominate a London dinner-table can dominate the world."

Wilde was already dominating London dinner-tables with his extraordinary conversation. Soon, through the medium of

his plays, he was to dominate the world by his gift of saying brilliant, nonsensical things which first made one laugh, often in spite of oneself, and then set one thinking—presently to realize that they were far from being as nonsensical as they seemed, but were actually profound criticisms on life in disguise. Like the old-time fool with his cap and bells, Wilde had taken up the rôle of king's jester to the public, and, while amusing it, he got home with deep and drastic truths that it would have heeded in no other form.

A hint of the forthcoming plays was presently given in the famous dialogue on "The Decay of Lying," printed in 1890 in the *Nineteenth Century*, a whimsical paradoxical arraignment of "realism" and that realistic school of novelists, with Zola as its master, which was then the fashion. By "lying" Wilde meant the power of imagination, and his dialogue was a plea for romance, invention, and fantasy in fiction. He begins thus:

One of the chief causes that can be assigned for the curiously commonplace character of most of the literature of our age is undoubtedly the decay of lying as an art, a science, and a social pleasure. The ancient historians gave us delightful fiction in the form of fact; the modern novelist presents us with dull facts under the guise of fiction. The blue book is rapidly becoming his ideal book for method and manner.

Passages such as this give us a foretaste of the dialogue that was soon to convulse with laughter not merely the stalls of London theaters, but the "gods" of the gallery and the pit, for Wilde's wit had such a basis of common sense that it appealed to all classes.

Thinking is the most unhealthy thing in the world, and people die of it just as they die of any other disease. Fortunately in England, at any rate, thought is not catching. Our splendid physique as a people is entirely due to our national stupidity. I only hope we shall be able to keep this great, historic bulwark of our happiness for many years to come; but I am afraid that we are beginning to be overeducated. At least, everybody who is incapable of learning has taken to teaching.

Side by side with these gayer excursions into paradox there appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* that essay on "The Soul of Man under Socialism" (1891), already mentioned, which perhaps shows the essential seriousness of Wilde's mind more than any other of his writings. Though here and there he employs his favorite method of flippant badinage, for the most part the

essay is very gravely written. Wilde fearlessly strikes to the root of the matter, showing at once his instinctive sympathy with the victims of our present social system, and his understanding of its practical problems. This essay shows how sincere had been his sigh at the end of his boyish sonnet on democracy:

These Christs that die upon the barricades,
God knows it, I am with them in some things!

Indeed, Wilde's heart was always in the right place, for all his affectation of cynicism. Sorrow and poverty never appealed to him in vain—as, years after, on his discharge from prison, his letters to the London *Daily Chronicle* on "The Case of Warder Martin," dealing with the cruel treatment of some children in jail, which had come under his notice, were further to testify.

Here are a few sentences from "The Soul of Man under Socialism" which will illustrate the temper of the whole essay:

Some try to solve the problem of poverty by keeping the poor alive; or, in the case of a very advanced school, by amusing the poor. But this is not a solution; it is an aggravation of the difficulty. The proper aim is to try and construct society on such a basis that poverty will be impossible. And the altruistic virtues have really prevented the carrying out of this aim.

Upon the other hand, socialism itself will be of value simply because it will lead to individualism. Socialism, communism, or whatever one chooses to call it, by converting private property into public wealth and substituting cooperation for competition, will restore society to its proper condition of a thoroughly healthy organism, and insure the material well-being of each member of the community. It will, in fact, give life its proper basis and its proper environment.

But for the full development of life to its highest mode of perfection something more is needed. What is needed is individualism. If the socialism is authoritarian; if there are governments armed with economic power as they are now with political power; if, in a word, we are to have industrial tyrannies, then the last state of man will be worse than the first.

Nothing should be able to harm a man except himself. Nothing should be able to rob a man at all. What a man really has is what is in him. What is outside of him should be a matter of no importance.

It will be a marvelous thing—the true personality of man—when we see it. Its value will not be measured by material things. It will have nothing. And yet it will have everything, and whatever one takes from it, it will still have, so rich will it be. It will not always be meddling with others, or asking them to be like itself. It will love them because they will be different. And yet, while it will not meddle with others, it will help all, as a beautiful thing helps us by being what it is. The personality of man will be very

wonderful. It will be as wonderful as the personality of a child.

WILDE'S SUCCESS AS A PLAYWRIGHT

On February 22, 1892, was produced "Lady Windermere's Fan," and Wilde entered upon that career of triumph which was as splendid as it was brief. For three years London was at his feet. Since Sheridan no dramatist had so completely "taken the town." He laughed, and the world laughed with him. "A Woman of No Importance" followed on April 19, 1893, and "An Ideal Husband" and "The Importance of Being Earnest" were produced within six weeks of each other—January 3, 1895, and February 14, 1895, respectively. Three of his plays were running simultaneously at London theaters when the stroke of destiny fell upon that gay, victorious figure, "the last of the dandies," which was to convert him into the most tragic figure of our time. Wilde had, in his youth, already tried his hand at playwriting, but "Vera, or the Nihilists," and "The Duchess of Padua" were melodramatic tragedies of an old pattern; while "Salome" was equally uncharacteristic of his real vocation to the stage.

Out of the ordeal of his imprisonment Wilde came with a broken spirit, and surely with a contrite heart, as "De Profundis" and the splendid swan-song of "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" bear noble witness. As one looks back, and then again realizes the reaction that has set in, since his death, toward a truer and lasting understanding of his genius, one can only vainly wish that the generation which saw both his triumph and his disgrace had been more generous in its attitude when, having gone through his ordeal and paid the bitter price, he was once more in the world, in the full maturity of his powers, and with a soul chastened and purged as by fire.

There is no estimating what the stimulus of a more kindly front toward him on the part of a public which he had delighted, and which he had also instructed far more than it realized, might have done for his genius. At all events he could hardly have given us any more comedies, and perhaps it was best, after all, that he should leave us his broken heart in "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," and go and rest in peace.

Yet all is well; he has but passed
To life's appointed bourn,
And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn.

Already the sad side of his story is taking its proper subordinate place in a career in which it was but a passing shadow. As I hinted at the beginning, he is rapidly reversing Shakespeare's dictum. Whatever evil there was in his life is buried with him, while the greatly overbalancing good is surviving with ever-increasing potency. Society begins to understand the difficult temperament of a man of genius better than it did even so short a time ago as during Wilde's generation. As the business man, whose visit to "An Ideal Husband" suggested this article, finely said:

"The artist nature does not possess the strong moral brakes on temperament, the delicate system of balances, which control the average human machine—the all-round, well-balanced man, as we say. Otherwise he would not be an artist."

Many as were the parts played by Wilde in his picturesque, meteoric career, it was as a wit that he has exercised the greatest influence upon his time; but his wit would not have had its driving force had he not been a poet, a philosopher, a deep and sad thinker upon life, as well as a laughing one. To be at once so sensitive a poet, so warmly human, so alive alike to the absurdity and the gravity of human life, and so accomplished a man of the world, is a rare combination. All this various background of his nature gives Wilde's wit a richness and a lasting application which distinguish it from any other wit of our time.

One of its significant qualities is its kindness. Impudent as it often is, and sets out to be, it is seldom unkind, and never bitter. There it is markedly different from the wit of Whistler, who absurdly pretended, with his characteristic arrogance, that Wilde had stolen his wit from him—as if a man could steal a general habit of mind. We all know the anecdote of Wilde congratulating Whistler on a *mot*, and generously adding how much he would like to have said it.

"Never mind, Oscar, you will say it," was the ugly retort, like the swift sting of a hornet.

Whistler's wit was always of the same kind, always a mean irritability vented against his rivals. Oscar Wilde's, on the contrary, played over all social absurdities like laughing sunshine. There was always something kind and even lovable about it; it was playful, like a clever child—and Wilde, indeed, was all his life no little of a child. It is that quality in him which made

it possible to write such exquisite nonsense as "The Importance of Being Earnest"—perhaps the one thing he did that was incapable of imitation by his contemporaries.

Again, beside Wilde's wit, such wit as Bernard Shaw's has a lean and hungry look—ill-nourished on the humanities, the wit of a schoolmaster, a doctrinaire, or a smart, atheistic, half-educated mechanic. Its appeal to the lower middle classes has naturally been enormous; but Wilde's wit appealed to all classes, for it drew its nutriment from a deep and rich culture and a broad, sympathetic knowledge of human beings in general.

Though it is his wit, the marvelous play of phrases tossed from one character to another, that mainly accounts for the success of Wilde's plays—proving, even more than the plays of Sheridan, that dialogue with a minimum of plot can carry a play, in spite of the critics—it must not be forgotten that Wilde has a great gift for character-creation, too. His figures are not mere puppets, as some have tried to make out, automata for the discharge of epigrams. On the contrary, they have all been closely observed, and they spring to life spontaneously, without any apparent effort of their creator. This is true of reading the plays, as of seeing them acted.

A MASTER OF PHRASE AND EPIGRAM

All the same, when the play is ended, and characters and dialogue alike have served their first purpose of making us laugh an evening through, we find the phrases of the dialogue coming back to us with an independent life. They haunt us with deeper meanings and wider applications than we had suspected. In fact, over and above our amusement, we find ourselves with an intellectual residuum, a piquant stimulus of thought, such as no other English playwright of our time has brought us. The phrases were certainly funny, but, as they recur to us, we become more and more struck by their remarkably destructive or instructive truth.

Here are a few such phrases picked at random from the plays:

My experience is that as soon as people are old enough to know better, they don't know anything at all.

There is a great deal of good in Lord Augustus. Fortunately it is all on the surface—just where good qualities should be.

To be in society is merely a bore; but to be out of it is simply a tragedy.

The history of women is the history of the worst form of tyranny the world has ever known—the tyranny of the weak over the strong. It is the only tyranny that lasts.

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.

Experience is the name Tuffy gives to his mistakes.

What a pity that in life we only get our lessons when they are of no use to us!

Pleasure is Nature's test, her sign of approval. When we are happy, we are always good; but when we are good, we are not always happy.

To get back one's youth one has merely to repeat one's follies.

Nothing can cure the soul but the senses, just as nothing can cure the senses but the soul.

An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all.

In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. The last is much the worst, the last is the real tragedy.

The Book of Life begins with a man and a woman in a garden. It ends with Revelations.

Twenty years of romance make a woman look like a ruin; but twenty years of marriage make her look like a public building.

Discontent is the starting-point in every man's career.

To recommend thrift to the poor is both grotesque and insulting. It is like advising a man who is starving to eat less.

Nothing is so dangerous as being too modern. One is apt to grow old-fashioned quite suddenly.

Philanthropic people lose all sense of humanity.

The fact of a man being a poisoner is nothing against his prose.

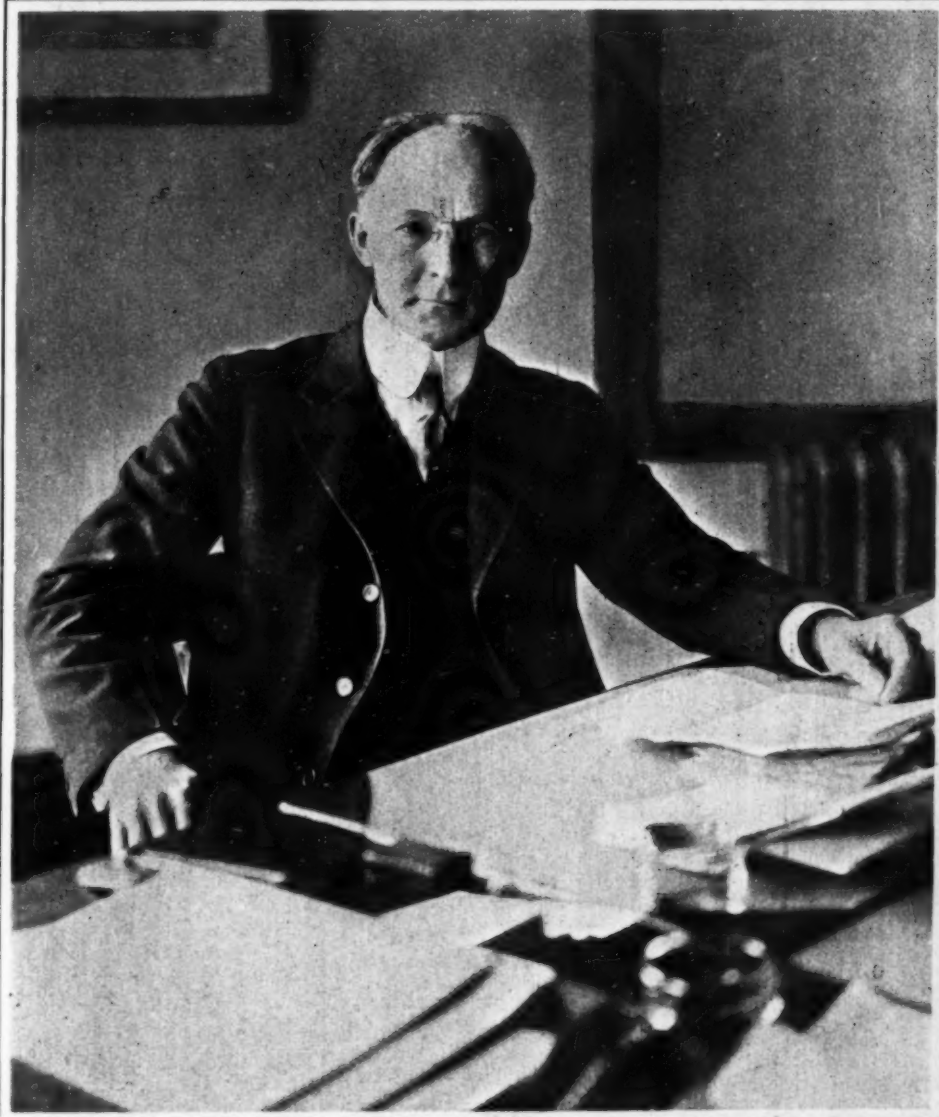
What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.

Perhaps this last phrase is the finest thing Wilde ever said; but often during these last four years I have thought of another saying of his, flippant on the surface, like so many, but, when analyzed and applied as it was meant to be, how profound and far-reaching! Speaking of the possibility of the arts making a bond of friendship between nations, he says that some day, when the world grows really civilized, men will say:

"We will not go to war with France, because her prose is perfect."

How lightly it is said, but what a world of truth and common sense lies beneath it! Will the time never come when spiritual and intellectual gratitude between nations will prove in itself an indissoluble league, and the great men and great achievements of individual nations give them a certain protective sacredness even in the eyes of their enemies? But alas, Rheims and Louvain are in ruins, and it was found necessary to protect even St. Mark's and Notre-Dame with sand-bags.

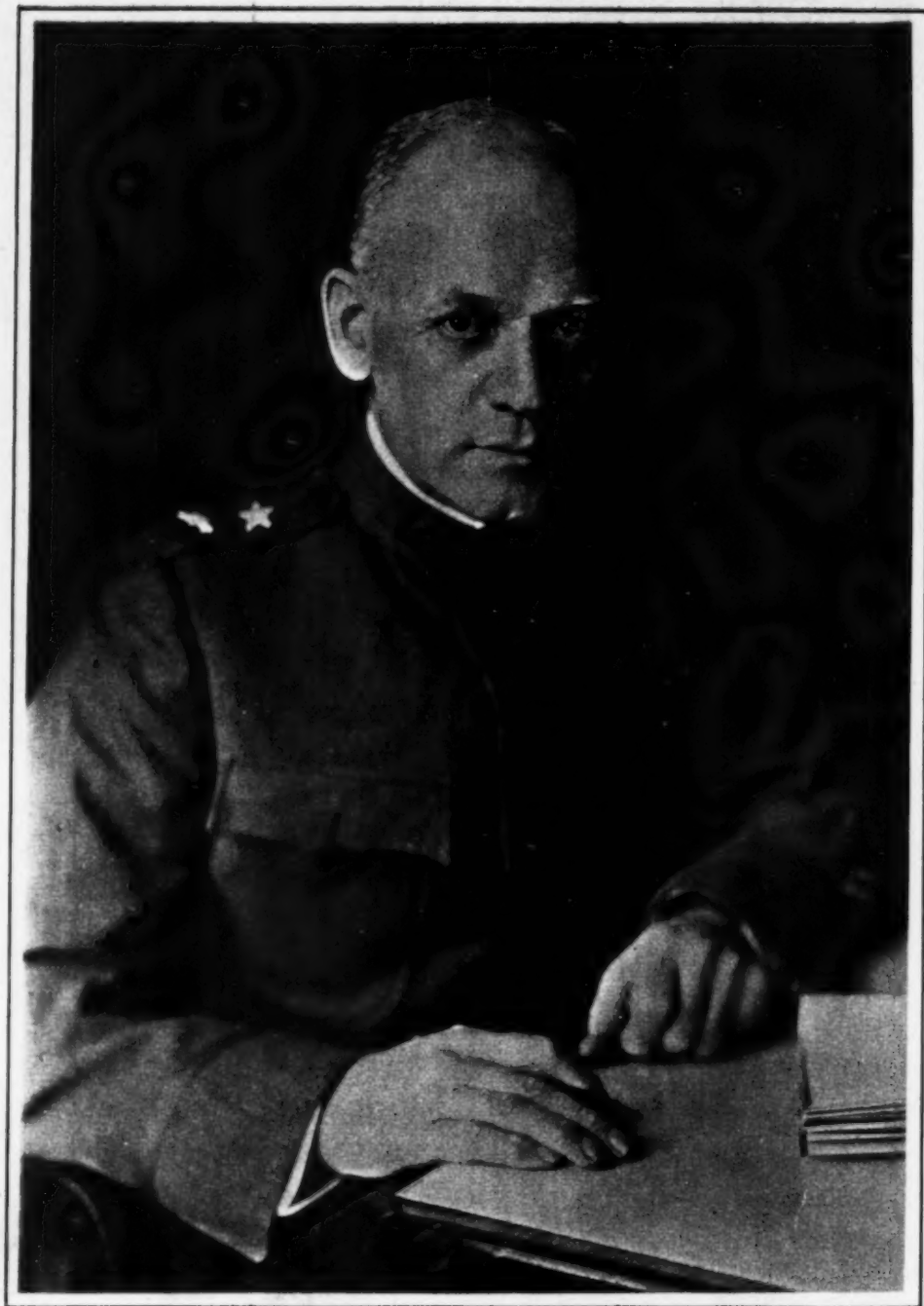
Told by the Camera



WALKER D. HINES, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF RAILROADS

Mr. Hines, who succeeded Ex-Secretary McAdoo as head of the United States Railroad Administration, was formerly chairman of the board of directors of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway—He is forty-nine years old, and a Kentuckian by birth

From a copyrighted photograph by the Western Newspaper Union, New York



MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES T. MENOHER, DIRECTOR OF THE AIR SERVICE

The new head of the Air Service recently returned from France, where he commanded the Forty-Second Division, the famous fighting unit known as the Rainbow Division

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington



PRESIDENT AND MRS. WILSON AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

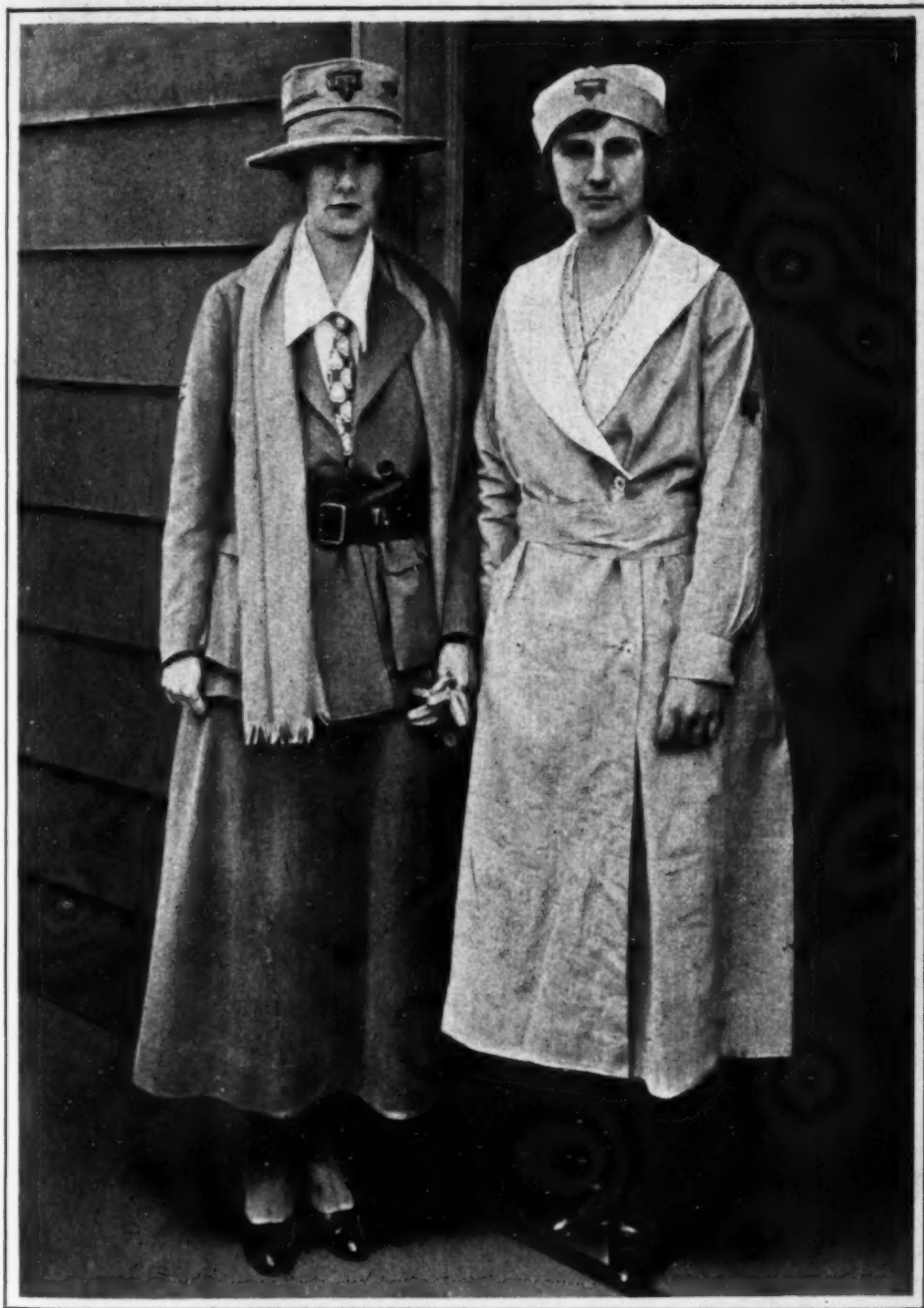
An interesting photograph taken during the President's visit to London.—From left to right, the figures are Mrs. Wilson, Queen Mary, President Wilson, King George, and Princess Mary



A NEW PORTRAIT OF CARDINAL GIBBONS

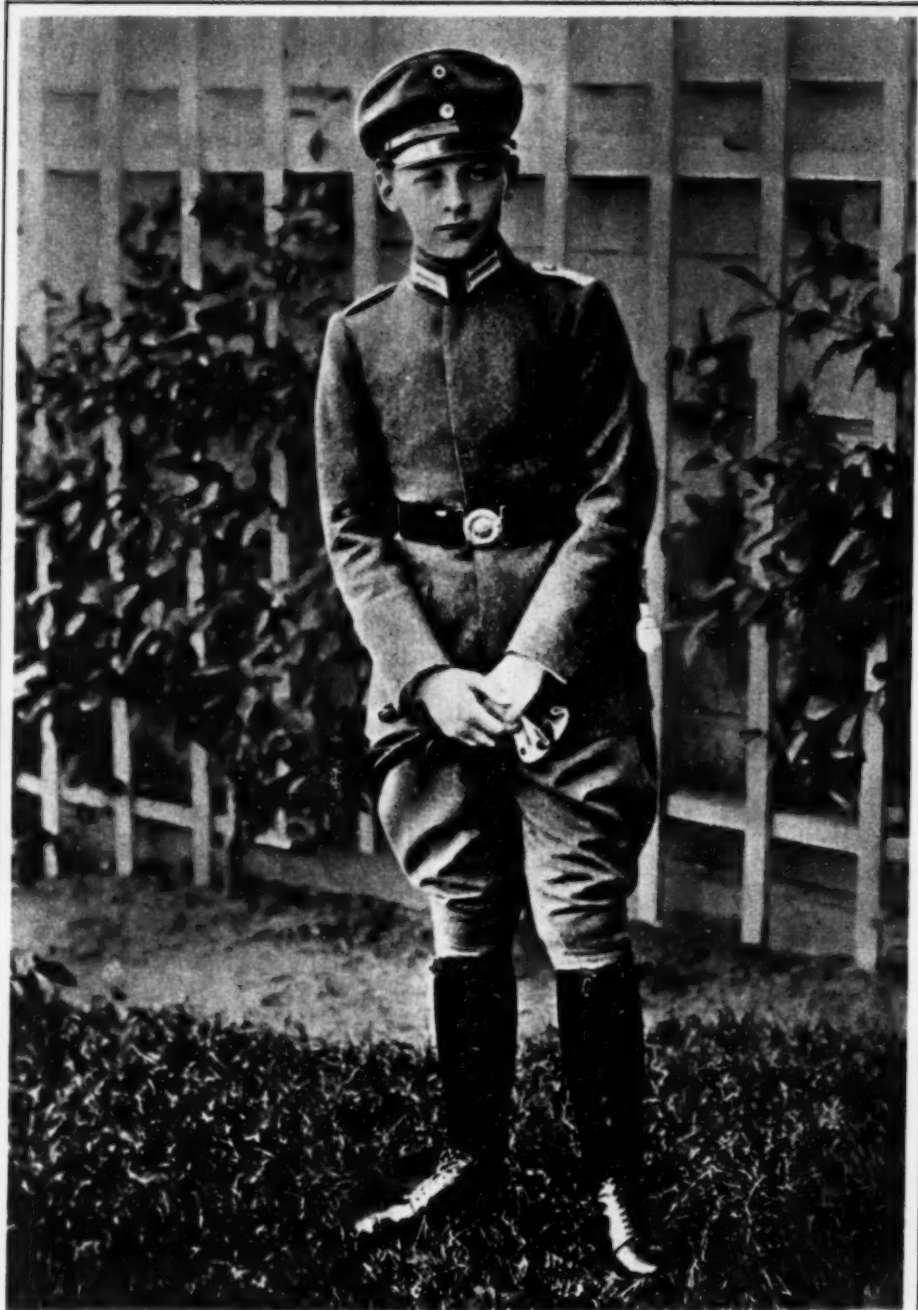
Taken in New York on January 14, when the venerable prelate, now in his eighty-fourth year, came from Baltimore to attend the funeral of Mgr. Fay

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York



MRS. VINCENT ASTOR AT THE VICTORY HUT IN BATTERY PARK, NEW YORK
Mrs. Astor, formerly Miss Helen Huntington, is chairman of the women workers at the hut—With her
(on the right) is Miss Marion Hollins, a member of her staff

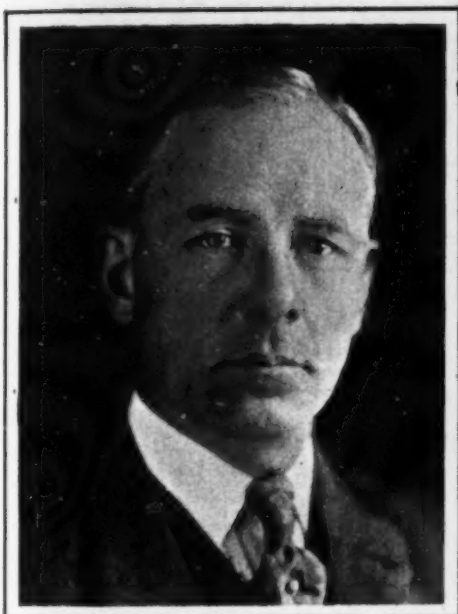
From a photograph by Thompson, New York



WILHELM FRIEDRICH (WILLIAM FREDERICK), THE EX-KAISER'S ELDEST GRANDSON

If any royalist party survives in Germany, he may one day be a "young pretender" to the throne which his father, the former crown prince, and his grandfather, the former Kaiser, have renounced

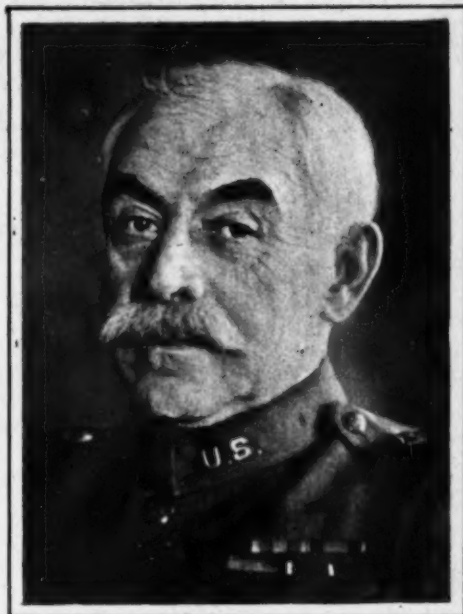
From a copyrighted photograph by the Press Illustrating Service, New York



THOMAS W. LAMONT, OF NEW YORK

Serving as an American financial adviser at the international peace conference in Paris

From a copyrighted photograph by Bachrach, N. Y.



MAJOR-GENERAL THOMAS H. BARRY

Recently appointed to command the Department of the East, with headquarters at Governors Island

Copyrighted by the Press Illustrating Service, N. Y.



CAPTAIN ROBERT A. BARTLETT

The explorer from Newfoundland, who intends to cross the arctic regions in an airplane next July

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LIEUT.-GENERAL JAN CHRISTIAN SMUTS

The South African general, who is one of the most active advocates of the idea of a league of nations

From a photograph by the Central News Service, N. Y.



JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR.

Mr. Rockefeller, son and namesake of America's wealthiest citizen, was chairman of the New York committee of the United War Work Campaign, and has done much patriotic service during the war

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



J. LEONARD REPROGLE, A LEADING STEEL EXPERT

Mr. Replogle, who has large iron and steel interests at Pittsburgh and in New Jersey, was one of the "dollar-a-year men," and did valuable service during the war as director of steel supplies for the War Industries Board

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington



SPEAKER CLARK AND HIS PREDECESSOR, SPEAKER CANNON

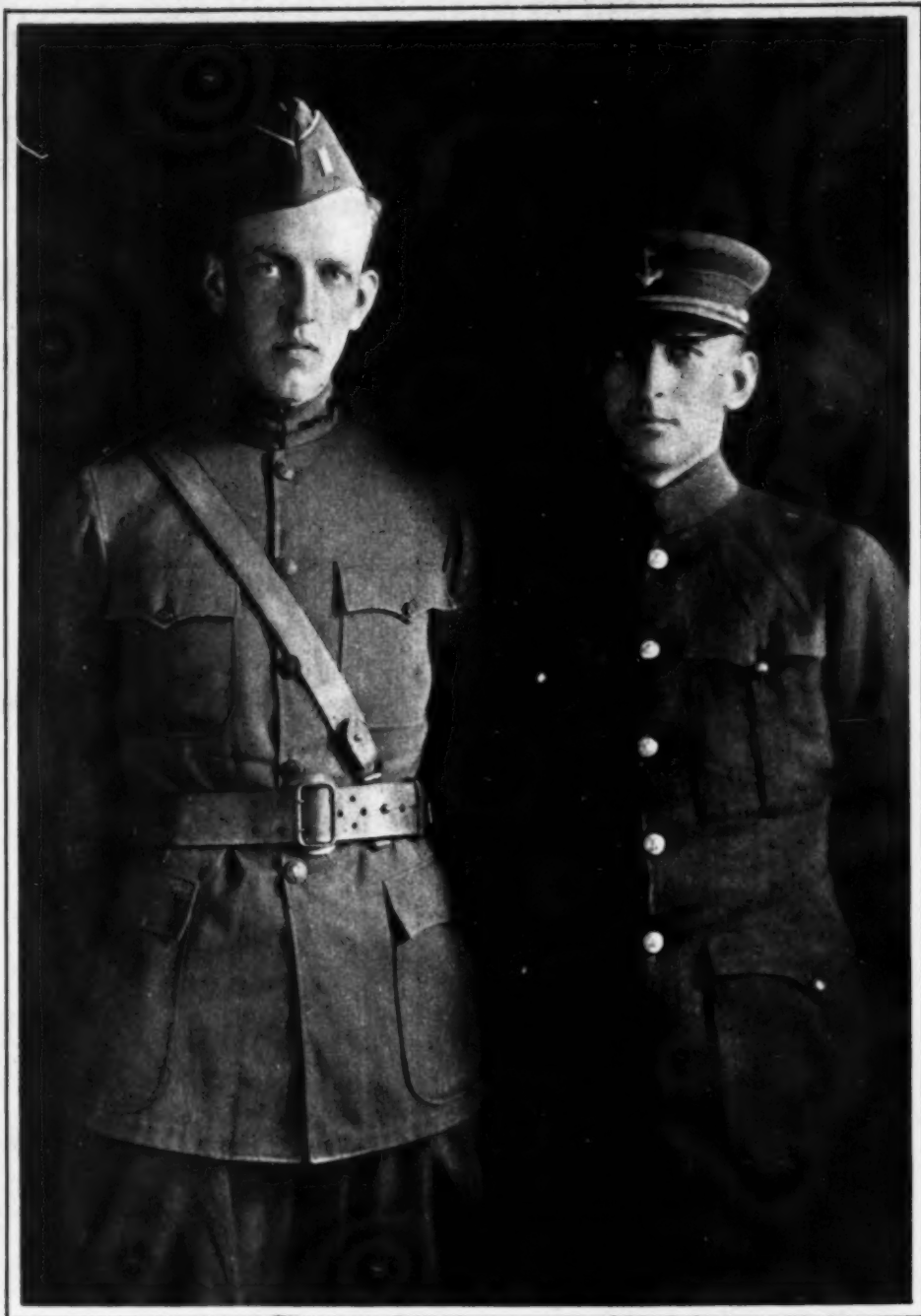
These two men, between them, have held the Speakership of the House of Representatives for sixteen years. Mr. Cannon having served from 1903 to 1911, and Mr. Clark, whose tenure will end on March 4, from 1911 to 1919

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York



IGNACE J. PADEREWSKI, POLISH PIANIST AND PATRIOT

One of the most surprising of recent political developments has been the appearance of Mr. Paderewski as a leader of the forces of patriotism and nationhood in Poland, and his acceptance of office as provisional premier at Warsaw. This picture shows him with Major Kasowski (left) and Captain Marten (right)



LIEUTENANT LOUIS F. SWIFT, JR., AND WILLIAM E. SWIFT

Soldier sons of Louis F. Swift, of Chicago—Lieutenant Swift is now serving overseas; his brother is a cadet at the aviation school at Miami, Florida

From a photograph by Bachrach, New York

The Lucky Eye

BY ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

Illustrated by Walter Tittle

CAPTAIN EPHRAIM HOMMEDIEU cocked a keen eye down the rambling village street. Captain Silas Pease followed the glance, and observed the approach of Hezekiah Hodges.

"Well, Eph," he observed dreamily, "it must be some hard to be a miser and know that all flesh is grass!"

"Grass?" growled Captain Pease resentfully. "When the Lord garners that there bunch, he'll find nothin' but weeds, an' mostly pisin!"

"Wouldn't wonder," his crony chuckled.

Taking a prolonged pull at his pipe, Eph watched the object of their mutual dislike as that unworthy abruptly tacked across the street and steered a slanting course in the general direction of the village green.

"What d'ye make o' that?" he inquired. "Somebody comin' down Water Street he don't want ter see?"

"Bet 'tain't nobody wantin' ter see *him*!" replied Captain Pease, nodding his head eagerly and tossing one booted leg over the other.

"Wouldn't wonder," Captain Hommedieu agreed.

Simultaneously they hitched back the empty salt-kegs on which they sat, in order to obtain a continued view of the disappearing Hodges.

"There ye are, Si," Eph chuckled. "It was Sam Lucky he was wearin' away from. He's a right smart lad, is Sam, if his mother was a Portugee. Gosh all cods, she wur a purty gal—remember?"

Silas smiled reminiscently.

"Yep, that's true. They do say that Sam's sparkin' Elsie Wheeler. Leastwise he's there a lot since he come."

"Too bad he ain't stayin' on," Hommedieu regretted. "Perhaps he might make that old skinflint do something for Elsie by way of weddin' settlement."

"Hezekiah Hodges give Elsie more'n a

sharp word?" Captain Pease snorted. "Why, he wouldn't give her the measles if he had 'em!"

"She's his only kin. She's got to get it all some day, ain't she?" queried Hommedieu. "Even pickled herring can't last forever. How old be he, anyhow? Nigh on to seventy."

"Let's see." Silas pulled his beard—a beard that looked as if it had been roughly obtained from a hair mattress. "His mother died when he was fifteen. That was fifty-seven years ago—the date's on her gravestone. I figger that Hezekiah's seventy-two—which is about seventy gol-durned years too many. Well, we're 'most through with him, I guess," he added hopefully.

"Wouldn't wonder," Eph observed; "but the old raskil will find some way to spend his money so's she don't git it—blamed if I kin guess how, he's that miserly."

There was a pause while the two elderly seamen stared out at the glinting waters of the cove and sniffed the familiar odors of the little New England port that had called them home after many years of ocean wanderings. The afternoon was brilliant, the wind caustic with salt. Wing and wing, the fishing-boats fled harborward before it. Captain Hommedieu sighed and turned to contemplate the gray and white town spreading itself along the beach and up the low dunes.

For a brooding quarter-hour there was placid and ruminative silence. It might have lasted till sundown, but for the purposeful interruption of Sam Lucky.

"Well, Sam!" Hommedieu pried his teeth from his pipe-stem and eyed the young man with reluctant approval. "What's eatin' ye?"

"Nothin's eatin' me," Lucky grinned, but his handsome face sobered as quickly as it had lightened to his smile. "I came to you two to get the right of something. I want

to know for a fact just how that old miser Hodges cheated Elsie Wheeler. The old devil's got such a grip on this whole town that nobody 'll speak out. And Elsie—well, you know her—she's so scared of being unfair to anybody, she won't say a word."

"Better set, Sam," said Captain Pease, kicking an "empty" invitingly. "Wouldn't wonder if we could give you the rights o' it. Me an' Eph got our pensions an' our an-

as security; an' when Wheeler up an' died, he tuck the place. Oh, it wuz legal, he had the witnessed words, but it sure were a dirty Chinese trick!"

"So he's goin' to let her live her young life out drudgin' down to the Chowder Palace. He's goin' to count his dollars while she hulls clams and peels potatoes and lugs chowder-kettles!" Sam Lucky threw out his arms in a large Latin gesture of angry



"AND NOBODY DOES ANYTHING. I TELL YOU, I'M GOIN' TO DO SOMETHING!"

nuity, an' we dun't hev to fear no man. You thinkin' o' marryin' Elsie?"

The young man's dark face flushed.

"No, cap." He shook his head sadly.

"I'm a play-actor, and a Portugee, and that puts me out of her class for good; but Elsie and me have been friends since we learned to bait a hook and pull a dory, and I'm not goin' to see her done if I can help it."

"Sam," said Captain Hommedieu with solemn conviction, "you *can't* help it. That old shark has got the law on his side. It was this way—he made Elsie's father, that wuz his own half-brother, a little loan, an' he fixed the note so's he got the hull place

disdain. "And nobody does anything. I tell you, *I'm* goin' to do something!"

Ephraim shifted his quid deliberately.

"Sam Lucky, what kin you do? You're nothin', as you say, but a play-actor, doin' shindies with your Professor What's-His-Name in the vaudyville; though we certainly do admire to hear you assault him."

Lucky crossed his arms over his breast and gazed out to sea. He was a picturesque figure against the background of blue water, with his slender straightness, his smooth, handsome face softened by the mysterious shine of deep-set eyes—eyes that seemed to hold and fascinate with a power all their

lambent own. The seven years of his absence from the village had hammered and sandpapered its hall-marks away. Seven years of far travel can do much to change a man, and his had carried him into the farthest climes.

Absently he took a coin from his pocket and began flipping it back and forth, his long fingers incredibly quick and graceful in their movements. The two captains watched him in growing wonder. In those supple fingers the coin darted like a live thing.

"What sort of play-actin' do you do, Sam?" said Pease suddenly. "I bet you're a juggler!"

Sam sent the silver disk high in air, and appeared to call it back in a half-circle that defied the laws of gravitation.

"Well," he said slowly, "I learned a lot of things out in India, you know. Some of 'em were juggling tricks, and some of 'em wasn't. Did you ever hear about Hindu hypnotism?" He straightened and shook himself with the agility and thoroughness of a wet dog. "But my two weeks' vacation is 'most up," he added ruefully. "I've got to join the professor in Boston; so, if I'm going to do anything with that old devil, I'd better begin. Trouble is, I don't know just where to begin."

Suddenly the pupils of Sam's black eyes widened, and a flush of color darkened his cheek. Instinctively the two captains followed his glance, and with the duplicate exactness of a well-trained chorus, they winked—for the trim blue gingham silhouette of Elsie Wheeler could be seen emerging from the fly-screen door of the Chowder Palace.

"So-long!" said Sam over his shoulder, for he was already three strides away from the dock.

"Don't care if he *be* a Portugee play-actor," said Hommedieu. "I hope he fer-gits it an' asks Elsie"; and he spat with vigor and precision.

II

SILENCE again fell between the inseparable derelicts, but no sooner had they settled to comfortable somnolence than they were again aroused. Josh Coffin, the town crier, came hurrying along, with a look of astounded inquiry on his face. Behind him ran Tony, the half-wit, obviously the bearer of incredible news, for Josh was shooting back questions at him as they scuttled by.

"Now what?" gasped Hommedieu.

A crutch and a cane came into instantaneous use as the veterans leaped out on the scent of excitement; but, try as they would, their more able-bodied predecessors gained on them and turned the corner toward the green. They stiffly galloped around the turn and stopped short.

"Sink me!" Captain Eph exclaimed.

The ejaculation was called forth by the sight of a stone-sled drawn in at the graveyard gate. On it reposed two huge slabs of white marble; behind, on a low swing truck, a sturdy shaft lay lengthwise; and at these a dozen Portuguese workmen, borrowed from the Tisbury concrete works, labored with rollers, blocks, and crowbars. Directing the proceedings was a city man in store clothes and a bowler hat, and in his wake, seemingly longer, leaner, and more appropriately cadaverous than ever, loomed Hezekiah Hodges.

The singular cortège had not arrived unobserved. The decorous columned doorways of the neat colonial houses surrounding the church and green had already opened to emit decorous women and such decorous children as were not indecorously playing on the water-front, and a silent group surrounded the voluble and perspiring laborers.

No questions were asked and no information vouchsafed. The thick lower slab was rolled into place and expertly plastered to receive the massive six-sided foot, whereon the shaft was to be set.

The observers, however, had not failed to interpret the proceedings. Captain Hommedieu poked the pea-jacketed ribs of Captain Pease, and gave vent to his feelings in a stentorian whisper.

"Sink me, but Hezekiah ain't takin' no chances on his monument!"

"Haw, haw!" The town crier thus audibly voiced his appreciation.

"What yer laughin' at?" demanded Hodges sharply.

Josiah Coffin's smile faded. Captain Hommedieu took up the challenge.

"Must 'a' cost ye a heap, Hezekiah. Must 'a' had a notion ye couldn't count on yer feller townsmen to erect a proper memorial to ye. Well, if it wuz put up by public subscription, it wouldn't be of no size to be no ornament to the town, *that's* certain!"

"What's the law ag'in' a man raisin' his own monument?" Hodges snarled. "You can't say that it ain't the handsomest in the



HE FIXED HODGES WITH EYES THAT GLITTERED WITH THE INTENSITY OF HIS ANGER—

churchyard. This yere stun artist says Pierpont Morgan ain't got no better."

"Got your eppytap all writ up?" sneered Captain Pease.

The stone artist smirked and cleared his throat.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Hodges has decided on the inscription. It is now being cut, two-and-a-half-inch block letters, very neat. It reads, 'Hezekiah Hull

Hodges,' with space above to add 'Here lies,' when the—er—term becomes appropriate—'Hezekiah Hull Hodges,' and then a beautiful verse:

"To all men just, to my ideals true,
Kindly I lived, and well respected, too.
Stranger, pray pause, and dry the tear—
My soul's in heaven, though I lie here.

"Mr. Hodges's own composition," the



—“A LIAR, A HYPOCRITE, A THIEF! HE ROBBED HIS OWN FLESH AND BLOOD!”

artist added, with a congratulatory wave of his hand.

The penetrating voice of old Mrs. Saunders spoke from the outer edge of the circle.

“All I got to say, Hezekiah, is that if you’d wanter be plumb certain about yer soul bein’ in heaven, there’s a few things you’d better be doin’ on earth!”

Emboldened by this speech, Mrs. Fishhouse Peters voiced her protest.

“Before I’d let a niece o’ mine work down to a chowder palace, Mr. Hodges, I’d sell my stun, not spend thousands on it as should hev been hers!”

“That’s right!” affirmed the minister’s wife, with most unusual self-assertion.

Hodges’s face darkened, but before he could reply to this feminine onslaught there was a swift milling among the onlookers, and Sam Lucky stepped out on the grass

of the Hodges plot. Pease and Hommedieu exchanged meaning glances.

"He's goin' to do that somethin' right now!" whispered Eph.

"Wouldn't wonder," Si hissed excitedly.

The young man looked about him. There was something forceful in his cool poise that compelled silence.

"Oh, don't think for a minute, friends," he drawled, while his black eyes bored into Hodges's narrowed, leering pupils, "that old skinflint here doesn't know what *ought* to be written on that monument! He knows what he's done, all right; he isn't self-deceived. He's a liar, a hypocrite, a thief—he tricked his own brother—he robbed his own flesh and blood. He knows well enough that he can't live honest, nor die honest, till he makes good—yes, I mean to Elsie Wheeler. His epitaph's written, all right, and it isn't this one. I tell you the real one was written then, over his brother's dead body that lies there, with that cheap little wooden cross to mark him"—Lucky pointed dramatically to the flimsy memorial that humbly occupied a corner of the plot—"and until he *does* make good, and stop wastin' that girl's freedom and youth and health on marbles to tickle his vanity with, I tell you, and tell him, he'll get no peace nor no rest!"

He fixed Hodges with eyes that glittered with the intensity of his anger, and stretched out his open hand before the other's face.

"A liar, a hypocrite, a thief!" he repeated with terrible emphasis. "He tricked his own brother—he robbed his own flesh and blood!"

There was a pause, a long pause, as the two stared at each other, and a strange expression of helplessness came over the old man's pale countenance. Then Lucky turned on his heel and walked away.

With an effort, Hezekiah seemed to pull himself together. His lips opened, but no words came. He stammered inarticulately, then furiously signed the laborers to resume their work.

"Well!" said Captain Pease, squaring his shoulders. "Let's be goin' down along. I guess it 'll give us all more pleasure to contemplate Hezekiah's monument when that there 'here lies' gets put in."

The crowd dispersed, its buzzing growing louder as it drew farther away.

III

THAT night the scene at the graveyard was discussed in every house. The return-

ing fishermen were met with the news, the village crackled with it like a busy wireless.

And while the village slept over the astounding events of the day, other events were shaping; for dawn and the first passers-by beheld, written in red chalk on the virgin marble of the newly erected shaft, words that seemed to burn the white stone:

A liar, a hypocrite, a thief.

I tricked my brother, I robbed my own flesh and blood.

By sunup the square was thronged. It was Tony, the half-wit, who had the temerity to break the news to Hodges. Thrusting his pale, excited face in at the kitchen door as Hezekiah was carefully measuring the grains of his morning coffee, he babbled:

"Mr. Hodges, Mr. Hodges, your stun says you're a thief an' a liar!"

The miser hesitated between his anger and the value of a handy saucepan, and in that instant the target vanished. He put down the coffee-pot and hurried down the center hall of the big, empty house. In the ground glass of the front door there were various cut patterns. Through these one might observe the street and remain unseen.

What Hezekiah beheld made him uneasy. Something extraordinary was toward. The fishermen, who should be at the wharves, and their wives, who should be at their stoves, were all on the street, hurrying in one direction. Up along came Captain Pease and Captain Hommedieu as fast as their afflictions would permit.

The sight electrified Hodges. Snatching his hat from the rack and his heavy ebony cane from the Chinese stand, he flung open the door and raced down the short brick walk to the gate. The crowd made way for him. People eyed him curiously as they fell aside and left him an unobstructed view of his monument.

"Who did this?" he yelled. "It's sacrilege! Who dared deface my gravestun?"

His fury was terrible. Even the rough-and-tumble fishermen gave back before him as he stormed.

"A hundred dollars," he screamed—"a hundred dollars to the man or woman who gives up the criminal—a hundred dollars!"

"Hold on!" cried Josh Coffin, the crier. "Hold on till I get my bell!"

"Hold on yerself!" snapped Hezekiah, suddenly coming to earth. "That offer ain't no good if it's Sam Lucky, and I *know* it is!"

"No, it ain't." It was Captain Pease who spoke. "Sam sailed over last evening to visit Abe Luffert at the lighthouse, an' he ain't back yet. Go 'long, Josh, an' git yer bell."

Josh obeyed. At intervals all that day the irregular streets echoed to its clang and the mellow, unctuous tones of the crier's voice announcing the reward.

Hezekiah, after having carefully washed away the red-chalked version of his character, descended upon the town council and demanded redress. The village's one policeman was detailed to make inquiry. The red chalk, it was learned, had been obtained from the schoolhouse; but that involved no one, as the lock had not been repaired for years, and access to the interior was a mere matter of opening the door.

Only one incident of an exciting nature resulted from the various activities of the search. Sam Lucky, on his return from the lighthouse, learned of Hezekiah's accusation. Then Sam smiled. His teeth were very white and even, but they looked dangerous. He sought out his enemy.

Hezekiah was on the upper step of the town-hall porch as Sam saw him. With a deliberation and menace that were snake-like, Sam mounted those six low steps toward his victim.

"I hear you accuse *me* of writing on your stone, Hodges," he said softly. "I want to tell you I did *not*. I'd 'a' writ much worse than that. I told you you'd get no rest till you cleared your conscience, didn't I? I told you you didn't have yourself fooled about what you'd done. You know that what was writ on your stone last night was the truth. Hezekiah Hodges, you're a liar, a hypocrite, a thief! You tricked your brother—you robbed your own flesh and blood!" he repeated, as he stooped the better to stare into the old man's vengeful eyes. "I'm goin' to Boston on to-night's train, but that won't stop the writin' on the wall—see if it does!"

He straightened, snapped his fingers derisively in Hezekiah's face, and turned on his heel.

Hodges remained as if frozen. The impertinence seemed to daze him utterly. It was not till Sam had reached Main Street that he recovered himself; then he danced with fury.

"A liar, a hypocrite, a thief!" he repeated in a cracked treble. "I'll have the law!"

He tottered back to the board-room and

spent his rage in demands for justice. Meanwhile his tormentor sought out Elsie, who was miserably self-conscious of the whole affair, and took her out sailing, while Mrs. Tewsbury tactfully did double duty as cook and waitress of the Chowder Palace till long past the dinner-hour.

Night came, and the town sank to rest after wishing Sam Lucky a cordial farewell at the "deppo." The lone watchman slumbered, as usual, on the green bench under the trees before the town hall. All was still. The ships' bells of the anchored fleet tinkled the speeding hours, to the melodious reassurance that all was well. No one roused the watchman with a command to turn the wheel of the great bronze alarm-bell.

Nevertheless, in those peaceful hours another outrage was perpetrated. When the light of a new day fell upon the marble of the bewitched monument it revealed once more the red chalk accusations—Hezekiah Hull Hodges was branded as a liar, a hypocrite, and a thief.

Warned of this new attack, Hezekiah did not wait to read the arraignment, but went straight to the authorities. A light had come to him—there was a motive. Who should hold ill will against him? Who other than Elsie Wheeler? Angered beyond all self-control, Hodges demanded the instant arrest of his niece.

Shocked and indignant, the council at last shook off its fear of the power of the Hodges money. Truckle to him they might in business matters, but this attack upon a girl—the girl who, having been victimized and fleeced, had valiantly and uncomplainingly gone to work right in her own home town—was not to be endured. The New England backbone stiffened, the New England tongue was whetted. Judge Spear awoke to eloquence, and the statements surreptitiously lettered upon Hodges's tombstone were unanimously indorsed to his face.

Boiling with resentment, Hodges burst into Mrs. Captain Tewsbury's Chowder Palace, and surprised Elsie among the steaming caldrons in the kitchen. Elsie bore his furious tongue-lashing in silence; but Mrs. Tewsbury had cultivated a storm voice on her many voyages with her late husband. She would and did have Hezekiah Hodges understand that Elsie was a good, God-fearing girl, who worked hard and "gave no one no trouble"; that she slept with the Tewsbury baby, who had the croup, and that they had all been up and

down all night in each other's company. As for writing on her uncle's gravestone that he was a liar, a hypocrite, and a thief, she only wished Elsie had, but she knew that the girl hadn't. However, if any one were needed to sit up nights for that purpose, she, Mrs. Captain Elisha Tewsbury, would gladly volunteer for such a public service.

Hodges, vanquished, took to his heels, and Mrs. Tewsbury rushed to the rescue of the neglected and scalding chowder.

A half-hour later, when Captain Hommedieu dropped in at the Palace for news of the fray, he discovered Elsie on the back steps, her lips trembling, and tears in her sweet blue eyes. Eph's tact was of the harpoon variety.

"Did that sculpin go to Boston without sayin' good-by to ye?" he asked bluntly.

Elsie looked up in utter amazement.

"How did you know?" she asked, startled out of her maidenly reticence.

"That idjit didn't trust hisself, I guess," said the captain to the ambient air.

Elsie looked comforted, and then blushed scarlet.

"I don't know what you mean!" she stammered, and fled into the house.

But the captain knew—and he swore.

IV

As the day drew to its close and no clue to the perpetrator of the outrages had been discovered, Hezekiah's anger grew. The whole place was leagued against him—of that he was certain. They laughed in their sleeves and taunted him. Determined to obtain some cooperation from the town fathers, he again visited the court-house, demanding that a watch be set over his desecrated grave.

The council agreed that the demand was just. No fellow townsman, however unpopular, could be expected to endure with equanimity the blazoning of his faults upon his tombstone, where tradition demanded that virtues alone should be set forth. It was up to the town to put a stop to such offenses.

The policeman was summoned, but he explained that his duties appertained to the day exclusively. It was the obvious duty of his colleague of the night hours to take charge.

The night patrolman was haled from his bed to receive orders. He looked sheepishly from the contorted face of Hodges to the frowning countenance of his employers,

hitched his trousers, ground his heel, loosened his soft collar with a hooked finger, and refused pointblank to assume the responsibility. He didn't mind, as he explained in humble and mumbling tones, a "run in" with any who might be smuggling liquor "by the underground." He could be trusted to give the alarm for fires; but he'd be jiggered if he'd sit in no graveyard and watch no Hodges monument, even if there weren't no corpse under it. There was no better officer than he, he assured them all, and no more loyal American citizen, but there were limits. It was not, as he proved to them, expected of him. There was no mention of any such service when he was sworn in. Spooks was spooks, and if it was anybody's business, it seemed clearly indicated that it was the minister's.

To request the Rev. Mr. Masters to sit up all night on any such pretext was out of the question. Judge Spear suggested, with bitter irony, that Mr. Hodges should defend his own tombstone. As the heaviest taxpayer in the town, Mr. Hodges sneered, the town owed him protection. The monument was his property, and his property was being defaced.

Josiah Coffin was summoned, and the matter was set before him. Then Hezekiah had an inspiration. He announced that fifteen dollars—to be deducted from the reward of one hundred offered for capture—would be paid for the service of watching the lot. Coffin hesitated, but on the stipulation of cash in advance he finally accepted the commission.

With every evidence of physical pain, Hodges tore three bills from the inside lining of an old wallet and handed them to the crier. Coffin fingered them eagerly, deposited two with Judge Spear, and requested change for the other.

The conference broke up, and its members duly sought their homes—all but Coffin. He must provision for this night cruise in unknown waters. He must have a pail of chowder from the Palace, sandwiches, and—

As twilight darkened over the sea, Josiah hobbled over to the rambling old waterfront structure, formerly a sail-loft, which provided bachelor quarters for Captain Hommedieu and a refuge for Captain Pease in time of marital unrest. Eph and Si were seated, as usual, back to back in two green-painted armchairs, a lamp between them on the deal table. Eph studied the worn

pages of a farmer's almanac, while Si laboriously puzzled over a monograph on whales. The room was shadowy with hung nets, piles of them, globular with glass air-bobs, littering the floor.

Into this reposeful interior Josiah entered, with a peculiar jerk of his finger and quick drooping of the left eyelid.

"Sure," grinned Captain Hommedieu, as he rose stiffly. "How many bottles?"

town meetin', to watch the stun of that gosh-all-fired shark, Hodges; an' I thut as you an' Cap Pease there would like to be in on it—not on the reward, I mean," he explained hastily; "*I'm* official watcher; but—well—for company. I'll say we'd bet-



BOILING WITH RESENTMENT,
HODGES BURST INTO MRS.
CAPTAIN TEWSBURY'S
CHOWDER PALACE

"Three," whispered the crier. "One for you, and one for Si, and one for me."

"Givin' a party?" Pease inquired.

Josiah drew up a chair.

"I'm ordered," he said, spreading his shoulders with importance, "at a special

ter make it four bottles, boys; what d'ye say?"

He held out a two-dollar bill, and laid it on the table. Captain Hommedieu lifted a knotted hand to his rheumatic shoulder, but curiosity is stronger than rheumatism, and,

moreover, he read acceptance in Captain Pease's eye.

"I dunno," he said. "Better take the demijohn."

"Wouldn't wonder," agreed Pease. "Get the loan of them there vac bottles that Mrs. Tewsbury lets out to them motor-boat parties, some chowder an' biscuit, an' a swig o' underground." He smacked his lips. "When do the wake begin?"

"Bout eight," grinned Coffin. "Meet me there. I'll have the lantern and the snack—sort o' picnic, hey, boys?"

V

EIGHT bells sounded over the water as the three watchers met beneath the gruesome shades of the graveyard willows. They selected for their provisions a table-top tombstone, whose owner had lived so long ago that all feeling of objection on his part was eliminated. The provident town crier had secured three yacht cushions, whereon they disposed themselves for the night. Near by, under a voluminous sweater, reposed the heavy demijohn. The lantern was placed at such an angle that the light fell upon the base of the impressive shaft that towered above them. Under the mellowing influence of the demijohn and the adventure, time rolled back for three old friends as they gossiped of a thousand memories and more tales of wonder than *Scheherezade* ever thought of.

"Was in Kobe when the tidal wave"—
"Do you remember Kanaka Jim, that Long brought home?"—"Swizzle me all cods, it was Bully Hayes"—"We seen things out in Bombay, Eph an' me!"

The underground whisky got lower in the jug. They took no note now of the faint chiming of the ships' bells in the harbor, and were scarcely conscious of the booming voice of the clock in the white belfry close beside them. Midnight came and went. Only one light showed in the closed and silent houses. Only Captain Hommedieu observed it, and he swore softly. He knew that that lamp shone in Elsie Wheeler's room—second floor, back of Mrs. Cotton's—and Eph felt sure it was not the baby's croup that held Elsie wakeful in the night.

Hot chowder from the vacuum bottles, pilot-biscuit, and ever and anon a return to the seductive jug, enlivened the three watchers.

"Ye know," observed Hommedieu, "whoever done this trick isn't goin' to come

along here an' get put in irons. They'd have to be drunk or crazy to walk right up to that lantern, let alone hearin' us yarnin'."

"Well, you don't expect us to sit yere in no dark, do ye?" demanded Coffin. "Neither you nor me nor Cap Pease is skeered of no land ghosts; but we're mariners enough to know the use o' starboard an' port lights. Heft us that jug, will ye?"

Hommedieu "hefted" the demijohn. Half-way in transit his arm became rigid.

"What's that?" he rasped, frozen into immobility.

Some one was walking heavily on the brick path, and an intermittent light flickered along the white paling. Then the click of the iron latch of the churchyard gate rang sharp in the tense silence. The hinges creaked, and footsteps approached with rhythmic steadiness.

A low-carried lantern now revealed a pair of heavy boots. The upper portion of the visitor remaining in the darkness. The light was barely lit, yet the man walked as if sure of every step.

"Sink me!" whispered Hommedieu in indignant amazement. "Sink me, if it ain't that blanked old skinkint come to see fer himself if ye're settin' up to yer watch!"

Coffin's face purpled with indignation as he raucously hissed:

"Well, just let him come! He'll see I ain't one to give no word an' not hold to it—the scarified old beetle!"

The brighter light of their own lamp now caught the approaching figure. There was something strange in its mechanical movement, something stranger still in the look of those wide-open, staring eyes.

"Hey, Hodges!" called Pease nervously.

"Sh!" hushed the crier, clutching hold of Silas's arm with the force of pincers. "So help me, he's—he's sleep-walkin'!"

The gaunt, marionettelike body slowed its measured pace and slunk brokenly to its knees before the monument. For an instant it remained there in an attitude of prayer, the lantern's light glinting on the staring, unseeing eyes. Then slowly, reluctantly, as if forced to the action by some unseen power, the stiff fingers of the right hand rose. They held a stick of red chalk. Methodically the hand began to form letters upon the marble, and with strange mouthings the lips followed each stroke—a ghastly parody of childish effort.

The three hardened old salts shook with fright. It was Eph who first recovered.

"You got the legs," he chattered. "Josh Coffin, you run an' get Judge Spear. Bring him here! This ain't goin' to be believed by *nobody*. Go git him!"

The crier rose with alacrity. The strange, inhuman caricature of Hezekiah Hodges continued painfully to letter the epitaph. The two captains, watching from the shadows, could plainly follow the words as that twisted mouth framed them—"a liar, a hypocrite, a thief."

Swift approaching steps, and the click of the latch. The wavering glow behind the kneeling writer revealed old Judge Spear in carpet slippers and a slicker. Both Pease and Hommedieu rose and moved forward, but the judge raised a warning hand. On tiptoe he circled wide and joined them.

"Tain't safe to wake a sleep-walker," he whispered.

"Well, if we dun't," Coffin argued shrewdly, "he ain't ever goin' to believe what we tell him, not if we get the hull town to witness."

"We cannot take chances on the man's life," replied the judge.

"I'd say that, too, mostly," agreed Hommedieu, "but that there—"

"What's he doin' now?" Coffin interrupted.

His work completed, Hodges was slowly dragging himself erect. He thrust out a seeking hand, seeming for a moment uncertain of his direction.

"Ketch him!" exclaimed Pease impulsively.

The sound of the voices appeared to reach the man's numbed consciousness, for he turned his still, masklike face toward the watchers. They held their breath, standing rigid as the marble monument, yet the blind eyes seemed to realize their presence. At first slowly, and then with lunging steps, he began to back away. His foot caught on some obstruction, and he fell, vanishing, suddenly engulfed in the darkness between the graves.

Judge Spear restrained his companions. They heard Hodges lift himself and grope vaguely for the fallen lantern. At last his hand closed upon it, and he held it up. Its rays fell upon a small wooden cross at whose foot he had crumpled—a small wooden cross on which was painted:

To the memory of John Hodges Wheeler.

The man stared at the gaunt, white symbol. His face, deep graven by the strong

lights and shadows of the flickering flame, took on a look of abject terror. Then into the staring eyes came consciousness once more, but reason storm-swept with fear and amazement.

"Good Heavens, he's awake!" gasped Judge Spear.

In questioning horror the aroused sleeper looked up at the still stars, around at the graves, down at his feet. Then his eyes traveled to his own shaking hand, which still clutched a fragment of red chalk. With a broken, animal cry that tore the stillness, he threw his arms above his head and fled, staggering, groping into the night.

The four shaken witnesses stood side by side in the quaking darkness. Judge Spear gulped a stinging dose from the demijohn, nor questioned its illicit source.

"There will be no further need to watch," he said in a hushed voice. "Gentlemen, the court is adjourned!"

VI

CAPTAIN PEASE joined Captain Hommedieu on the empty salt-kegs at Martin's Wharf. Captain Hommedieu was suffering acutely from rheumatism, and had been unable to make his accustomed visit to the post-office, the general center of news.

"Well, Eph!" Silas lit his pipe before beginning his narrative. "Old Hodges done the right thing when he done it. Judge Spear says he's made over the Wheeler place to Elsie, stock and furniture, an' he doesn't believe Hezekiah 'll ever show his face here again. He wrote the judge that if the stun people would take his monument back at half price, why, he's agreeable, and Elsie's to get the money; but she ain't goin' out none—seems as if she didn't keer." Si grunted inarticulate rage. "An' I 'most fergot, here's a letter fer ye, or a circular—it's sort o' big fer a letter."

He handed his friend a long envelope. The enclosure proved to be a small, yellow handbill.

"Professor Castiglio, the marvelous magician," it set forth, "assisted by Swami Sammi, the Hindu hypnotist and juggler, in world-staggering feats of mysterious magic, would tour the New England States."

Two portraits ornamented the announcement, from one of which the dark, handsome features and mysterious eyes of Sam Lucky looked straight at the startled captains from under the flat, close-plaited folds

of a white turban. They stared in silence at the picture.

"Do you remember what we seen in Calcutta?" said Hommedieu in a hushed voice.

"An' that fakir in Bombay!" Pease replied in a tone of awe.

"There's a lot of queer things in the world," muttered Hommedieu.

"Not forgettin' a rotten conscience!"

Captain Si ran a distorted finger down the list of dates and places that announced the route of the eminent entertainers. From a

tattered pocket he fished a pencil stub, and on the back of the circular he penciled a few lines.

"Thet 'll about ketch him," he averred, glancing again at the route. "You got the legs, you stump back to the deppo and send that there telegram."

Captain Eph read the message:

MR. SWAMI SAMMI LUCKY,
Elite Theater, Portland, Maine.

Come quick, you dumbd idjit. There's a girl here you got hipnertized!

The Rogues' Gallery

THE MOST PICTURESQUE AND ROMANTIC FIGURES IN THE LONG ANNALS OF
CRIME, FROM ANCIENT PIRATES LIKE THE ARGONAUTS TO
MODERN SWINDLERS LIKE MME. HUMBERT

By Edgar Saltus

BISMARCK said that a German should be ready to sacrifice not only life, but honor—such honor as exists between thieves, he must have meant, a meaning which a later Hun elucidated. "We can never be gentlemen," the creature chattered at an Englishman, who might have replied, and probably would have if he had thought: "No, scoundrels always."

Fortunately there are scoundrels and scoundrels. There have been rapsallions that ennobled their order. There have been rascals who were merely fine chaps. That Hunland has produced nothing of the kind is due to the fact that she could not be decent even in crime. In the circumstances it takes the taste out of one's mouth to turn from her scrofulous dwarfs to the splendid figures which the rogues' gallery of history displays.

As you enter there, the first picture is that of a rough-and-ready crew who, leaping literally from nowhere, vacated the morning-land, sailed the seas, entered the Euxine, and told primitive folk the time of day. In poetry they are known as the Argonauts. Poetry put them in argosies, crimson-hulled, purple-rigged, freighted with youth and beauty. Poetry is rather embellishing. The Argonauts were pirates.

Piracy used to be a trade quite like any other. It was also a school. From it infant Europe learned to spell. In addition to being a school, it was divine. To a world still young, pirates were gods. It was from them that blessings came. They told you not merely the time of day, but how to navigate the seas and how to beggar your neighbor.

That was all so marvelous that in processes of time piracy became a form of chivalry of which the knights, pirates no longer, were called corsairs. It was Byron, perhaps, unless it were Scott, to whom we are indebted for that.

Meanwhile Columbus had put down an idea, borrowed a boat on it, and brought back a world. At once into the ken of Europe swam unsuspected stars, and with them visions of realms and riches hitherto undreamed. By papal decree Spain took them all, and for their preservation shook at any alien who might venture that way the pleasant menace of "irons without sight of sun or moon."

The threat fell idly on the ears of men. It amused Raleigh. Morgan laughed at it. There you have two rascals worth looking at. A very important person whose name I have entirely forgotten called Raleigh a

spider from Hades. The term was unaffected. It was also apt.

RALEIGH'S ROMANTIC RASCALITY

King Elizabeth was even more felicitous. She called him a little dear. But Elizabeth, who had succeeded in being royally unaware of Shakespeare, was femininely aware of Sir Walter. He flattered her. He flattered her inhumanly. So are women and sovereigns won. At present, or at all events at present writing, the neutrality that doth hedge a king is Holland. But in those days a queen was some pumpkins. Flattery, therefore, was indicated. Raleigh applied it, and with what art will presently appear.

Piracy meanwhile had become a liberal profession. Recognized by the British government, younger sons took to it instead of the bar. Then suddenly the Caribbean swarmed with corsairs, or, more exactly, with buccaneers, as they were superiorly known at that time. They sought what men have ever sought—glory, gold, the joy of killing, the murderous serenity of the seas. In reading accounts of them you feel that they had their fill. That is so satisfactory. Besides, satisfaction stirs the imagination. It stirred theirs. With it they discovered El Dorado.

There is a great armchair of enchantments called "The Thousand and One Nights." Europe was unacquainted with them. They had not then been mistranslated. There is a little pastel of fairy-land called "Tales from Perrault." With that also Europe was unacquainted. Perrault had not yet come. It was small matter. The deficit El Dorado supplied. Arcady was less fair, Avalon less perfect. Moreover, by comparison, Pactolus was a beggarly ditch. In addition there was the sovereign, the Dorado, that is to say the Gilded One, whose body, rubbed with gum, was dusted with gold powder.

What more would you have—except hygiene? But the story set Europe mad. Besides, the site was known. It lay just beyond the Orinoco. Paradise always does lie just beyond. Expeditions in search of it started from every port. Here enters Sir Walter.

Three hundred and twenty-five years ago by the clock, Raleigh sailed for South America, and incidentally for anything and everything he could lay his hands on. Of buccaneers he was the biggest. Others took what they could get. He did also, and

their loot for good measure. While he was at it he found the site of El Dorado, but of the fabulous land of the fabulous Inca not a trace.

It will be assumed that on his return he exploded the legend. He did nothing of the kind. He said that El Dorado was precisely as it had been described, only more so, and to Elizabeth he related that at sight of her picture the emotions of the Gilded One were such that he swooned. No wonder she called him a little dear! My pen blushes at his scoundrelism.

THE GREATEST OF ALL THE MORGANS

Now let us take a look at Morgan. Men do not dream any more as that man lived. As a lad he shipped before the mast on which, almost before you could say Jack Robinson, he hoisted the black flag. Springing from the fore-castle, he mounted hand over hand from grade to grade until, with a fleet manned by two thousand demons, he was king of the high seas, a king with skull and crossbones for crown.

In the Antilles he was not king merely, he was a whirlwind. Puerto Principe fell before him like a house of cards. At sight of him Puerto Bello crumpled. From the unburied dead a pestilence stalked. Guzman, President of Panama, flew to the rescue. He brought an army and left a ransom. It was not the pestilence that alarmed him. It was Morgan, who followed him back to Panama and bagged every ounce of gold in the shop.

Then presently he was afar, leaning against the Pillars of Hercules, threatening to pull them down, threatening to demolish Gibraltar, whose forts he hushed. A fine chap! But fate was against him. Peace between England and Spain ensued, and a royal accolade diminished him from king into knight.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CAPTAIN KIDD

By comparison Kidd would seem very small potatoes, were it not for his beard, rich but false, and the mystery of the treasure that drapes him. The mystery is as false as the beard. If I may believe all I hear, and I am always most anxious to, portions of the treasure are at this very moment visible on Fifth Avenue.

The manner in which it was originally acquired is, if possible, equally clear. In a trial held at the Old Bailey it was shown that Kidd was not exactly what you would

call a pirate, but rather the agent of a syndicate, composed of big bugs, who had hired him to hunt and bag what pirates he could. It was a new sport, one which, properly conducted, promised to be more diverting than pigeon-shooting and more profitable than throwing dice.

Kidd saw to that. He cruised about, holding up and gutting every son of a gun he met. It was rare fun, and the profits were so lavish that instead of cashing them in to the syndicate he cached them for keeps. But where? That riddle, which has perplexed the simple, expert journalism solved. Some years ago the *Figaro*, a pleasant Parisian sheet, announced that Kidd sank the treasure in a lake in Central Park, where, later, the original Astor, when engaged in seal-hunting, tumbled overboard and found it. For that scoop, and certainly it was one, the *Figaro* rather patted itself on the back. Very justifiably, too. Poe never did better.

Kidd is not, perhaps, much to look at, but he belonged to an epoch that is. Men then, that were men, were not exclusively devoted to pious works. The legends of their days and deeds make very nice reading. They even made tolerable libretti. Look at *Fra Diavolo*. From brigand he turned hero, not in Auber's opera merely, but in a revolution. For that matter, look at Robin Hood, look at *Hernani*. Mr. De Koven wove a score about the one and Verdi was equally diligent, though perhaps more inspired, with the other.

THE ADVENTURES OF JACK SHEPPARD

It was from such splendid outlaws that Fielding and Ainsworth got a trapping or two for their characters. Ainsworth was the author of a hundred novels and a thousand crimes. The best concerns Jack Sheppard. I like Claude Duval well enough. If I were a girl, I would elope with Dick Turpin; but for steady company, give me Jack Sheppard.

He had a most taking way, so taking that it landed him in Newgate, where, at his manacled feet, sat people known as persons of distinction. I am not making that up; it is all down somewhere, and with it the fact that the king, George II, inquired—in German—very kindly about him. Well, why not? Of the two, Jack was far the cleverer. He saw Robin Hood and went him ten better. He not only inspired an opera, he inspired melodramas, panto-

mimes, farce, the president of the Royal Academy, and Hogarth himself. The attention he received was enough to make a prima donna blush. But Jack took it all, as he took everything else, very quietly. Like all great men, he was modest.

"Nothing," says a contemporary account, "contributes so much to the entertainment of the town as Jack's adventures."

These were not burglaries. Jack's experiments in the abstract science were very commonplace. No gentleman not in his cups would do more than boast of them. What endeared him to everybody was not his experiments, but his escapes.

One is gigantic. Handcuffed and chained to the floor of his cell, he broke loose, pulled down a cart-load of masonry, burrowed through a nine-foot wall, forced five doors, one of which the turnkeys themselves could not open, got to the roof and away. In all of prison lore, no one, except Latude, ever did better. Nabbed a fortnight later, Jack, drunk as a lord and equally insolent, promised his keepers that for all their irons he would go when he liked. You may be sure they believed him. Jack's word was better than his bonds.

THE POLISHED PRISONER OF THE BASTILLE

Latude's escape is told in his memoirs. That book is the longest lie ever printed; but, crammers deducted, a miracle remains. The Bastille which he described certainly existed, but only in his imagination. The Bastille was a hotel at which, for one reason or another, you were urged to put up. Life there was a holiday. Except for the refractory, there were no cells. One guest had a bed of scarlet damask and a service of gold. Another guest asked for a billiard-table and got it. Latude complained because a chicken was not stuffed.

Shut up for annoying a lady, he insulted everybody. There was no getting on with him at all. As a consequence he was put in a cell. The cell, a vault on the top of the building, was supplied with a chimney and a door. The chimney was so grated that if he had given up the ghost it may be doubted if he could have given it up that chimney. Behind the door were warders and a surveillance so keen that a speck on the floor could have betrayed him.

None the less he made a rope ladder, which was afterward exhibited, and removed the gratings from the chimney. The gratings were fastened with mortar. To

soften the mortar he blew water from his mouth. For years he was at it; then he escaped, but only to be retaken and thrown into a deeper dungeon, where he succeeded in making tablets from bread-crumbs, ink from blood, pens from fish-bones, and in writing a letter which finally secured his release, but which at first his jailer refused to take, believing that it had come from the devil. But by that time the Pompadour was dead. The rascal had been jailed for annoying her. He might have done worse, and in the rogues' gallery he looks it.

CARTOUCHE, PRINCE OF BURGLARS.

Across the way is Cartouche. In his day, if you had said that, the street would have emptied. Cartouche was terror. He was also charm. A slender fellow with a wild-cat's agility and an endearing smile, he had a sword at his side and a knife in his mouth. His tongue stung as promptly as his steel. When, after a life splendidly misspent, the death-warrant was brought him, he corrected its grammar with a jest. It takes a fine chap to do that.

He did something finer. He furnished his dining-room admirably. The sideboard was a joy to behold. Then, happening, by accident as it seemed, to jostle a stranger, he lifted his plumed hat high in the air, held it at arm's length, swept the ground with it, apologized properly, and, for further amends, invited the man to supper. The guest did not know his host from Adam, but the furniture, the sideboard aglow with gold plate, he recognized at once. They were his.

Doubly furious, enraged at the robbery, and even more by the effrontery of the invitation, he whipped out his sword. You will fancy that the footpad did likewise. Not a bit of it. There he stood, arms folded, smiling endearingly and giving it to him very gently.

"I am Cartouche, and your most obedient servant."

The terror of that! But the potency, too! Back went the sword, back also went the poor devil. It was his turn to apologize. Whether then he stopped and supped I cannot say, but I can say that he was an imbecile if he did not. To break bread with a king of the highways must, I think, be a treat.

For that matter it would be a treat to wine and dine with any of these rascals. You don't find their like to-day. Modern

additions to the gallery consist mainly in dull ruffians. There are exceptions, yes, but barely more than a baker's dozen.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VANISHING DUKE

Among these, the picture of the last Duke of Portland is about the best, though whether it is a good likeness I really do not know; but I fervently hope so, for behind it there is a story that knocks "The Mysteries of Udolpho" into a cocked hat. Beginning very tamely with a murder, it works up into an unholy masquerade and ends with the funeral of a shopkeeper, who was then dying, it is true, but of laughter. It was certainly very lively. In the coffin was old iron. Moreover, to add to the gaiety, presently the dead man popped up in his shop and frightened the clerks into fits.

There are stories, however old, that are always young. This story has been told and retold, and will be told again; yet, to my immense regret, not by me. I lack the art, which is a detail, for I lack, too, the space. But here, in cobweb, is the outline:

At Welbeck, the seat of the Portlands, the duke's brother was very well one minute and quite dead the next. Whether or not the duke killed him you are left to guess, though what may help is the fact that if he did not hear the benches of the Old Bailey creak, if he did not see a black-capped beak, one finger raised—if he missed these emotions, he missed also his vocation. He should have been an actor. Instead, he turned mole, burrowing beneath Welbeck, into an underground plaisance from which an escape could be effected, ordinarily that is, but a duke is—or was then—a marked man.

This man needed a disguise, and he got one. His bankers received instructions to transfer from his account to that of T. C. Druce the sum of two hundred thousand pounds. There you have him not merely underground, but in the heart of a fantasmagoria. The real was giving to the fictitious. Moreover, a metamorphosis was in preparation. From the skin of a mole a shopkeeper emerged. Ovid imagined nothing so surprising. Saint-Germain, who made little diamonds big and old women young, was unequal to such wizardry. Even Edison could not do it.

What is better still, there is more of it. In no time, Druce opened a shop in London, and the duke disappeared. Then Druce went away and the duke came back.

Then the duke vanished and Druce popped up. Between them they played hide-and-seek for years, during which Druce, who had married and was the father of a bouncing brat, effected an exit from life in an empty hearse, and the duke—all creaks and shivers gone—returned, dying of laughter, to Welbeck. Finally, full of years and dishonors, he really and truly did die, whereupon the widowed daughter-in-law of the late Mr. Druce advanced the foregoing allegations and claimed the peerage for her son. She did not get it, but if I were Lloyd George I would get her another for the entertainment that she caused. Honest husbandry should be rewarded.

MME. HUMBERT'S FANTOM MILLIONS

By the same token, if I were Clément, I would do even better by Mme. Humbert. For while Mrs. Druce may have displayed an enviable imagination, this other lady is a genius. Mrs. Druce had a vanishing duke, and that in itself is a corker. But how it dwindles beside vanishing litigants, fantom millions, and the high act of necromancy in which Mme. Humbert took an absence of anything, a zero with the periphery eliminated, and from it produced a safe full of government bonds which, at a touch, crumbled into a collar-button and a penny. Where is "The Moonstone" after that? Where are "Armada" and "The Woman in White"? Mrs. Druce knocked "The Mysteries of Udolpho" silly. With rarer ability Mme. Humbert smashed to smithereens the complete works of Wilkie Collins. It is true she had to cut and run for it, but genius is never appreciated.

But *oyes!* At Nice, not so many years ago, Richard Crawford, a plutocratic New Yorker, concluded to die, but beforehand, for our amusement, perhaps, he made and executed two wills on the very same day. Aged and ailing at the time, he had been tenderly nursed by Thérèse Machin, a sweet young thing, the daughter of a local and most respectable greengrocer. By one will he gave her his millions. By the other they went to his nephews.

That was hard luck on Thérèse, or rather might have been, if the nephews had not turned out to be very decent chaps, as rich as their uncle, and anxious merely for an amicable adjustment. As a result they entered into an agreement whereby, pending decision, the millions invested in govern-

ment bonds were to be sealed in a safe, of which Thérèse was to be guardian.

As it was stipulated, so it was done, and not a minute too soon, for at once the nephews sued for the entire estate. What are you to do with chaps like these? Thérèse defended the action, and one of the boys stepped out. The second brother kept at it until he was nonsuited, when the other brother stepped back. Then, sometimes jointly, sometimes severally, they pleaded, counterpleaded, petitioned, and appealed. It seemed as though the very devil were in them. But, thank fortune, there was the safe before which—delightful precaution—guards patrolled, and which, as it was afterward shown, contained air, a bit of celluloid, and a two-sou piece.

No matter, there it was, and on the strength of it Thérèse was enabled to lead a life of active brigandage, to borrow a hundred million francs, to hocus-pocus the astutest, fill her house with the pick of the basket, bamboozle the world, rook the ghetto, add to the gaiety of nations, and call herself the daughter of—whom do you suppose?

Meanwhile, or rather long before—just a week after the death of her amusing benefactor—she had become Mme. Humbert, daughter-in-law, and at-law, of the minister of justice, who must have been a fine old cock. Between the two my admiration wavers. For though Thérèse, in the full play of her genius, invented Crawford, invented his wealth, his nephews, and his wills, it was the elder Humbert who, by virtue of his office, was able to shuffle the cards and stage the litigation between frauds and fantoms on which this immortal farce was founded.

In the trial that followed—when Thérèse was caught, and it took a fast express to do it—she admitted with very engaging modesty that the entire masterpiece was her own, every bit of it except the millions, which, when she was not looking, others had squandered, but which had come to her from her father who was—must she tell? And in public? She covered her face, bowed her head. Bazaine!

Bazaine, the arch-traitor who, in the Franco-Prussian War, sold out Metz to the Huns. All pure poetry. Bazaine was no more her father than I am. Fine work, though. Startled the court. A genius to the last! In this whole gallery of rapscallions I like her face the best.



HER ATTITUDE WAS RECEPTIVE, SUBTLY PROVOCATIVE OF CONFIDENCES, AND MR. MILLER APPEARED TO SENSE IT

Hick, Hick, Hooray!

BY THOMAS ADDISON

Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker

SHE was American of the fourth descent from somebody—she did not know whom—coming from some place—she did not know where. By birth her name was Titlark, by marriage it was Poggles, but by deliberate assumption it was Blavowski. The reason becomes instantly apparent when it is recorded that the lady conducted a beauty parlor.

Poggles's Beauty Parlor, or even Titlark's—what lure of mystery, of wizard lore, could pertain to an establishment so entitled? None! Therefore, in the interests of a beneficent art, the name of a ravishing adventuress was lifted from the pages of a best-seller, and Mrs. Poggles thenceforward was known to an innocent public as Mme.

Telka Blavowski, priestess in the temple of Venus.

She was a raven-haired, comely, wide-awake person who had passed the forty mark, and did not show it. Her dress was devoid of the frills and fripperies the less sagacious members of her craft flaunted in the face of patronage. Black, cunningly fashioned to give to her somewhat ample contours the seeming of gently molded circumfluences, was her chosen color.

Should any one ascribe the choice to a loved remembrance of a recently departed mate, well and good; his relict bore him no ill will, not any more than to a thorn removed from the flesh in which it had cankered. As a matter of plain fact, how-

ever, she leaned to black for one sole sufficient reason—it was a dramatic foil to a skin as white and smooth as a pan of morning's milk.

To no witchery of cosmetics did Mme. Telka Blavowski owe her miracle of a complexion; it was an outright gift of the gods which jealously tended, had endured with her from girlhood. But not for worlds would she have proclaimed it so. Rather did she foster in a wistful clientele the belief that art, not nature, was sponsor for her cuticular charm. In fine, it was an asset in the practise of her profession worth money in the till. Could it have been stripped from her and placed on sale it would have brought from eager bidders its weight in rubies of the Orient.

The beauty parlor was on the ground floor of the Leroy office-building in a flourishing Southern city. Velours hangings gathered on a brass rod veiled the lower half of the broad plate-glass window on which were inscribed Mme. Blavowski's name and calling.

Here, on a Thursday morning early in September, the lady sat in a rocking-chair, looking out over her draperies at a weird procession of human heads bobbing by as if unrelated to any supporting substance.

One of these heads had fixed *madame's* attention. Twice in the space of perhaps three minutes it had passed the window, and was now repassing. It was crowned with a soft black hat which was pushed back from the forehead, revealing a seamed and sunburnt face shaved clean.

The peculiarity of this particular head, which drew Mme. Telka's flashing black eyes to it, was that with each passing it had turned to the window with a certain spasmodic quirk, as of metal to magnet, and with a slowing up in progression which now, on its third appearance, brought it to an irresolute pause.

"He's coming in, Lucille. He's made up his mind."

Mme. Telka addressed this remark to her assistant, a quasi-young thing with beaded lashes and a cloud of genuine peroxid hair. She also had been watching the performance outside, though with only languid interest.

"A hick!" she pronounced laconically. "He'll be shedding hayseed all over the place."

Her employer rebuked her for the cynicism,

"Money is money, it don't matter whose pocket it's in," she defined austerely. "Go over outer the way and sit down, Lucille."

Lucille tilted on spool heels across the wide room to her post of duty. This was a little alcove in which was a table and two chairs in confidential *vis-à-vis*. On the table were marshaled in precise array orange-sticks, rouge-buffers, eye-pencils, files, nail-scissors, and Heaven knows what of unguents, pastes, creams, and powders in vessels of silver, glass, and porcelain. Here Lucille sat down and yawned in frank abandon.

II

THE door opened, and the man in his entirety of body hesitantly inserted himself into the room. He was not young, yet one received from his face the impression of an unconquerable boyishness. Had Mme. Telka Blavowski said "Boo!" at that moment, undoubtedly he would have turned and fled; instead she rose from her chair without precipitancy and drawled in a refined tone:

"Aw—howdoodoo, sir? Can I have the pleasure to be of service to you?"

The man returned the salutation with an embarrassed grin.

"Thank you, ma'am," he stammered. "I ain't just sure you kin help me any. I saw an ad about your place in the paper an' thought I'd drop in an' see."

He advanced as he spoke, a tall, loosely knitted figure clothed in the fashion prevalent of a Sunday in village centers. His pale-blue eyes rested in awed fascination on the implements ranged on the polished surface of the table within the alcove before which the chief ministrant of the beauty parlor had taken her stand. *Madame* smiled reassuringly.

"There's few but what we can't help, Mr.—aw?"

"Miller, ma'am, Henry Miller," supplied the other. "From Green Cove, up the river."

"Aw—yes! Chawmin' place, I'm told," purred the lady with serene mendacity. "De-lighted, Mr. Miller. Pray accep' this chair."

Mr. Miller seated himself bashfully at the table. Mme. Telka flirted to with a milk-white hand the filmy curtains to the recess. The act seemed to enshroud them with privacy which, however, was wholly illusory, for barring a slight mistiness of

outline they could be seen from the waiting-room as well as before.

"Consultations is free," observed *madame* vivaciously.

She sat down opposite her client. Her attitude was receptive, subtly provocative of confidences, and Mr. Miller appeared to sense it.

"That don't worry me none, ma'am," he said. "I'm able to pay, I reckon." He grinned with large complacency. "I sold my sawmill last week for fourteen thousand dollars, money in the bank. What I want to know is, kin you do anything for them?"

He spread flat on the table two enormous red hands. The skin of them was rough, freckled, and hairy, and the fingers were thick and stumpy, with nails hard as duck-bills; powerful hands that could wield a cant-hook as easily as Mme. Telka could twiddle a toothpick. She surveyed them with a qualm of dismay. It was mollified immediately by the remembrance of the cash in bank, and she summoned a cogitative frown.

"I can do consid'able," she professed at length. "Consid'able, if you don't expect too much."

"I ain't expectin' it," declared the client earnestly. "All I'm hopin' for is that you kin make 'em look like somethin' human; not smaller, it ain't possible, but more like—well, like *hands*!"

He held them up, palms out, two huge slabs of calloused flesh. Something in the intense solicitude of his expression stirred Mme. Telka Blavowski to an emotion in which sympathy and curiosity were blended.

"I can whiten 'em, and smooth 'em, and soften 'em," she encouraged. "The nails is what 'll take time. They got to grow; but I guess we can manage 'em. You ain't married?"

She smiled at the inutile question even as she uttered it. The answer was in evidence.

"No, ma'am," he said.

"But you're goin' to be?" she hinted with an arch look.

"I dunno, ma'am."

A cherry tinge flooded Mr. Miller's tanned cheek. He had laid his hands on the table again. It was as if they were detached personal effects that he did not precisely know what to do with. *Madame* lifted one of them, and rested the fingers on her small pink palm. She bent over in apparent study of them. An odd tangle of thoughts was besetting her.

"You don't know?" she murmured. "That sounds funny."

"Well, you see, ma'am—" The man floundered between desire and diffidence. He craved to share his secret with some one—some one other than his intimates, with whom, somehow, secrets of this nature could not be shared. And this friendly woman opposite was not in a position to abuse a stranger's confidence, even if she would. He took courage and plunged forward. "You see, ma'am, I ain't asked her. To tell the truth, I'm skeered to—a big, rough cuss like me, an' she like a—a piece o' fine chinaware. Why, ma'am, if I was to tech her, I'd be afeared o' breakin' her!"

He laughed back in his throat, low and pleased, as at a tender drollery he had perpetrated. *Madame* dipped an orange-stick in a colorless liquid and set to work at the skin-folds on his nails.

"She lives in your town?" she asked.

"No—at Arcadia, 'bout six miles from me. I go down there in my car to preachin'. They got a better man, to my thinkin', than at Green Cove."

"I suppose so," said *madame* dryly. "So you got a car? That's nice. And you take her out in it?"

She selected a pair of cuticle-scissors and plied them deftly.

"Yes, ma'am, 'long with others." He laughed again. "You see, she teaches school in Arcadia, an' I ain't exactly what you'd call bookish myself. So sometimes I bring the preacher an' his wife, an' sometimes the county clerk an' hisn. It makes it interestin' for Miss Lizzie, I figure, 'stead o' chasin' around all alone with a dummy like me."

Mme. Telka glanced at him curiously, and resumed her task.

"Lizzie! So that's her name?"

"Yes'm—Miss Lizzie Evans."

"How old is she? But that's a pers'nal question—"

"No, ma'am, not at all," refuted Mr. Miller in his abandon to the subject uppermost in his heart. "She's thirty-three an' I'm forty-three. 'Tain't such a mighty diff'rence, do you think it is, ma'am, 'tween a man an' a woman?" A note of anxiety was in his voice.

"Some people thinks it's just about right," she answered, and added demurely: "I ain't so much older than her myself, and a widder." She sighed.

"Oh, a widder!"

Mr. Miller adopted a hushed tone in harmony, as he thought, with the occasion. The lady giggled gently.

"It's over long ago—ages. I'm in black for business reasons. And it's a protection to me. Some gen'l'mun is inclined to be flirty, you know, even if a body ain't as pretty as a picture."

Madame relinquished his hand, and, tilting back her head, looked full at him. It disclosed the white roundness of her throat and neck. Her eyes were very bright, and her full lips were curved with an inscrutable expression. Henry Miller, up to now rapt in devotion at the shrine of his Arcadian divinity, was as a man suddenly led forth into another fane and bidden to see. It was this acute transition, perhaps, that brought a miracle to his tongue.

"But, ma'am, you're as pretty as any picture I ever seen. You—you're like moonlight on the water!"

Madame sat perfectly still an astonished moment. Then:

"You call yourself a dummy, and say things like that?"

Miller had crimsoned to his ears. He was abashed, out of countenance utterly.

"I don't know how it happened; I ain't never said the like of it afore in all my life," he stuttered. "It warn't flirty, ma'am—honest!"

The lady mantled him with a smile as free of guile as his spoken words, for all unconsciously he had dipped into the hidden fonts of her fancy. But she only said:

"Aw, I know it! You ain't that kind." She gave her attention to his other hand. "You didn't tell me yet," she went on after a while, "what got you to wanting treatment. You going to quit working, now you got all that money?"

"Quit!" The idea of it made him chuckle. "I'm only just startin' in. I'm aimin' now to git into somethin' bigger—buyin' standing timber. Takes a head, that does, not hands; an' so I got the notion I'd spruce up a leetle." He held up his free hand and regarded it quizzically. "*Hams* she called 'em—"

"Not Miss Evans? Not her?"

Mme. Telka paused in her work.

"Oh, no, ma'am! Another girl I know at Green Cove—one o' the kiddin' kind. But it set me to thinkin'. If they looked like that to her, they'd look like that to others." He grinned not unmirthfully. "I

reckon they do favor a shoulder o' hog a leetle when they're spread out on a steerin'-wheel. It kinder struck me that way when I was drivin' in here to the city this mornin'."

"Aw, so you came in your car instead of by train?" *Madame's* interest in her client was accelerated. "I love motoring!"

"Yes'm," said Henry simply.

He checked the impulse, born of a broad good-nature, to go further. It might be considered "flirty"—a thing as remote as the stars of heaven from his mind.

Madame worked on in silence after this; but her thoughts were busy. Here was a man of a likable homeliness, and genuine as his forest trees. Strong as a giant he was, and gentle as a child. Capable, too, in his way. And he had a motor-car, and fourteen thousand dollars in the bank! An unattached woman might well think upon these things.

She put his hand aside, giving it a dainty tap as she did so, to signify that she was done with it for the present. This was a business, as she had decided at the beginning, to be profitably nourished.

"That's all for now, Mr. Miller," she said. "I got an engagement coming on. To-morrer at ten, please."

Miller contemplated his burnished nails with a blank look.

"You're done with me for to-day?" he exclaimed. "I was kinder hopin' you'd git to whiten 'em some—my hands."

"In one day!" *Madame* smiled indulgently. "You didn't think that, did you? We got to treat 'em, you know—manipulation, massaging, depilation. All that takes time. You ain't got to go home right off, have you? You can stay in the city a few days?"

"Why, yes," he hesitated. "I reckon I could manage to hang around a while, ma'am, only—"

"You want to get back and see Miss Evans," put in *madame* slyly.

"It's on Sundays I run down there, ma'am, an' this is only Thursday," he said soberly. "It ain't that. It's 'cause it's so dog-gone lonely here in the city, when you ain't got friends. That's why." He stood up and reached in his pocket. "What am I owin' you, ma'am, for as fur as you've gone?"

"Aw, that can wait till we're through." She rose and looked at him across the table from under drooped lashes. "You oughtn't



"SOME GEN'L'MAN IS GOING TO LOSE HIS HEART TO-NIGHT, MISS—ER—AW?"

to be lonesome with an auto. There's lots of lovely drives, and places where you can have a little supper if you want. I don't get to go much myself, for I ain't got a friend with a car. But—"

A studied pause eloquent of invitation supervened. Henry Miller's mental processes were not inordinately rapid, but they could keep pace with a proposition as plain as this. His pale eyes lighted up.

"I'm not making too bold on short acquaintance, I hope, ma'am—if I am, just put me where I belong—but I'd be downright pleased to drive you out any time you say!"

"Why, that's awf'ly kind, I'm sure!" She flashed him a melting glance. "Of course, I know it's 'cause you're just so lonely—"

"No, no! I'd like to have you, ma'am—honest!" he asseverated with a warmth that reddened him as he realized it.

"Aw, you needn't make believe with me, Mr. Miller," she retorted playfully. "I un'erstand. We're just two lonely people wanting company, and so— Come at six to-night, and I'll be ready. Here, I guess.

People do so like to talk when a feller comes 'round to where you live."

"Thank you, ma'am. Six o'clock prompt," said Mr. Miller gratefully.

He put out his hand, and hers nestled in it—a little velvety living thing he could have flattened to a shaving with one careless pressure of his fingers. A thought sent a hot shiver coursing through him. He dropped Mme. Telka's hand, and with a mumbled word of parting made his way to the street. Lucille, employed in her alcove with a client, with a twisted smile watched him go.

"She must 'a' soaked that hick proper, the way he looks," she mused. "Two or three dollars maybe, and it's ruined him. He's going to jump in the river and end it all!"

Mme. Telka Blavowski, meanwhile, had turned to a mirror on the wall behind her, and stood before it in studious contemplation. Presently she spoke softly to herself.

"You're getting on, Sarah Poggles! A few more years, and you won't have a chance. And I could make a gen'l'man of him in his looks." She shrugged her plump

shoulders. "We'll see what happens. I got him going, anyway!"

III

ON Sunday Henry Miller did not attend preaching at Arcadia. It was the first time in three months that he had failed to do so. Lizzie Evans knew, because she had kept track of it.

She was a little creature, not over five feet three, and spare of figure, though not of a dried and drear tenuity. Hints of a graceful girlhood still lingered with her. Her small, sallow face, with straight hair drawn severely back from the temples, could never have passed her to the exhibition bench of a beauty show; yet, on the other hand, it was lighted with a pair of opal-brown eyes of an emotional quality that could attract, repulse, and even command, as the mood might dictate. They were an abiding charm, these eyes; they were also an asset of much value to a teacher of turbulent boys and girls in the third grade of a haphazard country school.

On this Sunday Miss Evans sat in automatic attention to the reverend gentleman expounding his text from the pulpit above her; but her thoughts did not dutifully follow him. They strayed.

Henry Miller's accustomed seat was in the rear of hers, on the side aisle. Through every service hitherto she had felt his devotional eyes upon her, as one feels in a dark room a friendly presence there besides one's own, yet neither sees nor touches it. To-day the presence was missing, and Miss Evans felt strangely desolate. There was no comfort in the sermon for her. Promises of celestial bliss lacked, it seemed, a prerequisite of some sort here below.

That night, after making ready for bed, Miss Evans sat for a long time at her darkened window, looking out on a starlit world and seeing nothing of it. Her thoughts, looming large, obscured the prospect. What these thoughts were it would be indelicate, perhaps, to inquire; but they resulted in a procedure of an odd likeness to that of a certain lady in the city not so many hours before.

Miss Evans rose and drew the curtains to her windows with the deliberation of a settled resolve. Following this she relighted her lamp, and, holding it high, placed herself squarely before the glass of the golden-oak bureau in the corner and examined in slow detail the face reflected back to her.

At last she placed the lamp on the table, and, gathering up the scattered sheets of the Sunday paper from the city, sat down to a quest through its advertising columns. She was rewarded, it appeared, for she scissored out an item and put it carefully away. This done, she extinguished the light and got into bed.

She was going to take a little journey in the morning. School would not begin for a week yet; until then she was free.

It was eleven o'clock the next day when Miss Evans entered Mme. Blavowski's beauty parlor. The proprietress was out on a business errand, and Lucille of the beaded lashes was dismissing from her ministrations a macaronic elderly gentleman who ogled her with his recessional bow.

There was not a shade of hesitancy in Miss Evans's bearing as she stepped in. She was a woman with her mind made up, and there is no other such determined being on this green earth.

"I wish," she said in a clear, calm voice, "to be recommended to a cream that will improve my complexion."

"Yes?" said Lucille without enthusiasm.

She was inclined to look disparagingly on this small, plain person habited in a mode antedated in the fashion sheets.

"And," pursued Miss Evans, "I wish to have my hair waved, and to be instructed how I may keep it waved at home. And I will have my hands manicured, I think."

Lucille's manner took on a sudden suavity. This was an order that she could make run into money.

"A Kressle wave, of course?" she suggested unctuously. "We do that back in there—a private room. But I'll have to keep you waiting—dre'fully sorry—till Mme. Blavowski returns. I'm all alone; but I expect her every minute."

"I'm in no hurry," said Miss Evans agreeably. "What will it cost, all of it?"

"Well, the wave, and pads for home use, is nine dollars and a half. The cream—Say, did you ever meet Mme. Blavowski?"

"No."

"Um! She's got a skin like twenty-dollar white velvet," said Lucille with feeling. "You wait till you see her. Rose de Blavowski is what done it—her own make, and only two dollars per jar. Now the manicuring—lemme look at your hands, please. U-m-m! You've suttinly kep' 'em well. I won't charge you only fifty cents for them."

"Twelve dollars!"

Miss Evans could not suppress a little gasp. The expense was beyond her utmost anticipation.

"I'll show you how to use the cream and give you a massage with it," put in Lucille quickly. "You won't know yourself, reelly. What you need is color. Rose de Blavowski will give it to you, and puffedly nachual—like the flowers in the yard. Shall I begin with your hands while we're waiting?"

Miss Evans, as the other talked, could see roses blooming in her cheeks. It decided her.

"Very well, you may do so," she assented.

Lucille seated her, and, as she worked, discoursed on a certain secret lotion which she reserved strictly for the elect among her patrons. From any face under fifty it sent wrinkles packing about their business; in proof whereof she again cited Mme. Blavowski's serviceable complexion.

"And only five dollars!" she concluded.

A dramatic gesture implied that at this paltry sum she was throwing the precious elixir away. Miss Evans sighed wistfully, but was firm.

"Not to-day, I thank you. I'll think about it."

"Sure! To-morrer is another day," observed Lucille in bright accord. "Guess I got it all the first crack," she reflected. "Oh, well!"

Madame came in as the manicuring was finished. She was sparkling with the good humor of one on whom the Fates are smiling sunnily. Miss Evans was lost in wonder at her, but Lucille considered her with a sardonic eye. She could guess the cause of her cheeriness. That hick again! He was shedding coin instead of hayseed. Talk about luck! Some people fell into it like a cat in the cream. The thought irritated Lucille.

"I been waiting for you," she said in an injured tone. "I got a client here that wants a Kressle. This way, lady."

She marched Miss Evans off into the back room without giving Mme. Telka the wonted opportunity to parade her professional patter before a new votary in the temple.

IV

It was an hour later when the two emerged from their retirement. Miss Evans's cheeks wore a delicate flush. Her

thrush-brown hair was fluffed and waved. It fringed her forehead with wanton undulations, and rippled seductively up on her well-turned head. Her eyes were luminous with the mirrored discovery that she almost touched on prettiness. She was denied her hat by Lucille. The artist's pride was evoked in the girl, and she wished her superior to witness the wonder she had wrought.

"Aw—chawmin', chawmin'! A credit to the parlor," drawled *madame* graciously. She patted the little palpitant figure with an approving hand. "Some gen'tman is going to lose his heart to-night, Miss—er—aw?"

"Miss Lizzie Evans," offered Lucille, who made it a practise to book the names of promising clients.

She stared at Mme. Blavowski. That lady's hand had abruptly ceased to pat; it had frozen still.

"Arcadia?" she catechized breathlessly.

"Yes. Why?"

Miss Evans came to an alarmed stop. Mme. Blavowski had whirled about and thrown a glance at the clock on the wall.

"My Lord! Twelve thirty!" she gulped.

As if timed to her very words, Henry Miller entered from the street. He was resplendent in a pearl-gray stiff hat, a pearl-gray "cut in" business suit, fawn spats, and a butterfly tie of Peking blue. It would have been difficult to find his match anywhere off Times Square.

"I'm on the dot, Telka!" he grinned in high feather. "Had to park my car 'round the corner—"

He stopped. Something unusual was going on. Mme. Telka had made him a covert sign which failed of whatever purpose inspired it. Henry did not comprehend. He only gaped at her, and from her to the little woman with head disdainfully lifted who stood away from her to one side.

Something about her, sweetly familiar yet unaccountably strange, riveted his gaze. Slowly it was drilled into him who this lovely being was. Incredulity, amazement, and then a great tide of gladness swept over him.

"Lizzie, is it—is it *you*?" he faltered.

He advanced a step or two, and halted. In the eyes fixed on him was no responsive gladness. Repulsion and a vast surprise were there, nothing more. Both were oblivious of their audience in the shock of this critical moment.



"A GEN'L'MAN AIN'T ALWAYS A MAN, BUT
A MAN IS ALWAYS A GEN'L'MAN.
HE'S ONE. GO ON HOME WITH
HIM IN HIS CAR!"

Mme. Blavowski looked on in stony immobility. She could find no word to change the sorry turn that fate had served her. Lucille looked on in acute enjoyment; it was a play and no admission asked.

Miss Evans remained mute. Pained, be-

wildered to extremity, Henry shuffled a step nearer.

"Won't you speak to me, Lizzie?" he pleaded. "I'm powerful glad to see you."

She answered then, her eyes slanting scornfully at *madame*.

"You expect me to believe that?"

He was silent, while understanding came difficultly to him.

"Oh!" he said at last. "You think—"

He stopped there, inhaling deeply. Miss Evans, seeing only a perfectly interpretable confusion on his part, turned to Lucille.

"My hat, please. I am going!"

It loosened Henry Miller's tongue. It did not occur to him to question her presence there, or its motive. His sole desperate thought was to explain his own presence, and his easy familiarity with this other woman. Single-minded though he was in his affections, he could perceive that appearances were against him.

"Look, Lizzie!" he cried. He extended his hands. They were absurdly smooth, and of a yellow whitishness, like bleached straw. "She done this for me, Tel—Missus Telka there. They were only *hams* before. It's what Annie Robbins at Green Cove called 'em, an' what everybody thought, I reckon. An' now look!"

He paddled the air with them lightly, the better to compel Lizzie's attention, and went on.

"It's what I come for to-day—to have 'em treated some more. It's what I've been here since Thursday for; an' it's why I warn't at church yesterday."

Miss Evans's lip curled, but she waited.

"I wanted to give you a surprise," continued Henry. "I—I thought mebbe it 'd please you. An' this suit o' clothes—I thought you'd like 'em. She helped me there, too, Missus Telka did; I couldn't tell just what to git. She's been kind to me—a real friend. She's showed me about —showed me drives to places I didn't ever know of. I swan to goodness, Lizzie, I'd 'a' died o' lonesomeness here if it hadn't been for her!"

It was an unfortunate addendum. Miss Evans's eyes had softened—had held, indeed, a promise; but with this last utterance they hardened to icy brilliance.

"What a pity!" she commented in a brittle voice, and devoted her complete attention—or so she imagined—to the adjustment of her hat.

Lucille coughed to smother an incipient snicker. She was regarding Mme. Blavowski closely.

Henry Miller's frank statement had dissipated any lingering hopes that *madame* may have had of him into the mists that dreams are made of; but she was not without the sovereign mettle of the martyr. She drewled out in handsomely affected nonchalance:

"Aw, don't mention it, Henry! I had a good time. I seen a lot of places myself I wasn't at before. We're even up, you and me. You don't owe me a cent for treatments. So that's settled!"

She wiped out the account with a flourish of her alabaster hand, and turned her attention to a superfluous rearrangement of the tidy on a neighboring chair.

Miss Evans's fluttering fingers jabbed her hatpin in with careless disregard of the Kressle wave. The hat was canted on her head at a rakish angle of which she was totally unaware; and in this grand crisis she would have cared not a whit had she been aware of it. She was starting off in high-crested hauteur when Lucille spoke.

"Here's your face-cream and hair-pads, lady!"

Miss Evans could not repudiate the package, as she would have given twice twelve dollars to do. She accepted it with dignity, and was marching past Henry Miller's crushed and baffled figure, when Mme. Blavowski startled her to a stand.

"What's the use of all this?" she broke out in severe accents. "You heard what he said, and it's the truth. He's talked of you till I'm deaf with it. The man is crazy in love with you—nutty! The Lord knows why, but it's so. Go on home with him. I've done enough to his hands. They'll be like they was in a month, anyway; and they're best so at that. A gen'l'man ain't always a man, but a man is always a gen'l'man. He's one. Go on home with him in his car!"

She moved off with a grand air; but she had neglected something, and she stopped.

"He didn't offer to call me Telka himself; I ast him to," she said.

Calmly superior to the spellbound gaze of her assistant, Mme. Blavowski retired in state to the room at the rear.

Miss Evans's haughty aloofness had slipped from her, until now she stood bare of pride and contritely suppliant.

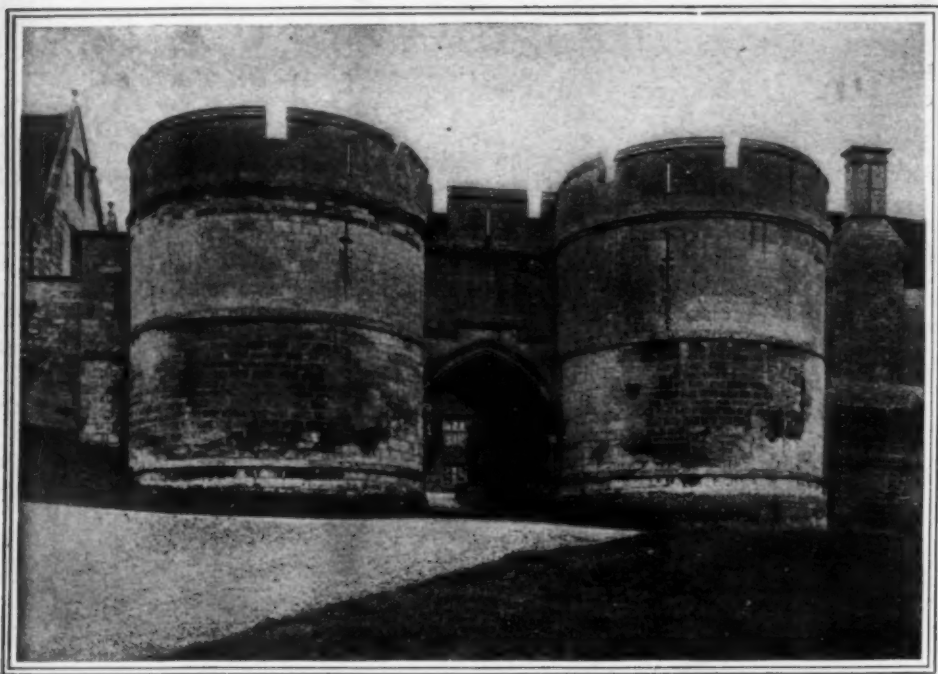
"Henry, will you—oh, will you take me home?" she petitioned in trembling tones.

"Will I?" cried Henry. "I'd tote you ev'ry step of it in my arms, leetle girl, if there warn't no other way o' gittin' there!"

When they were gone, Lucille waved her handkerchief wildly above her head.

"Hick, hick, hooray!" she crowed.

Then, strangely, she dropped down on a chair and dabbed at her eyes with the flimsy little rag.



THE GATEWAY OF ROCKINGHAM CASTLE, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, ONCE A ROYAL RESIDENCE

Old English Roads and New Associations

(SECOND ARTICLE)

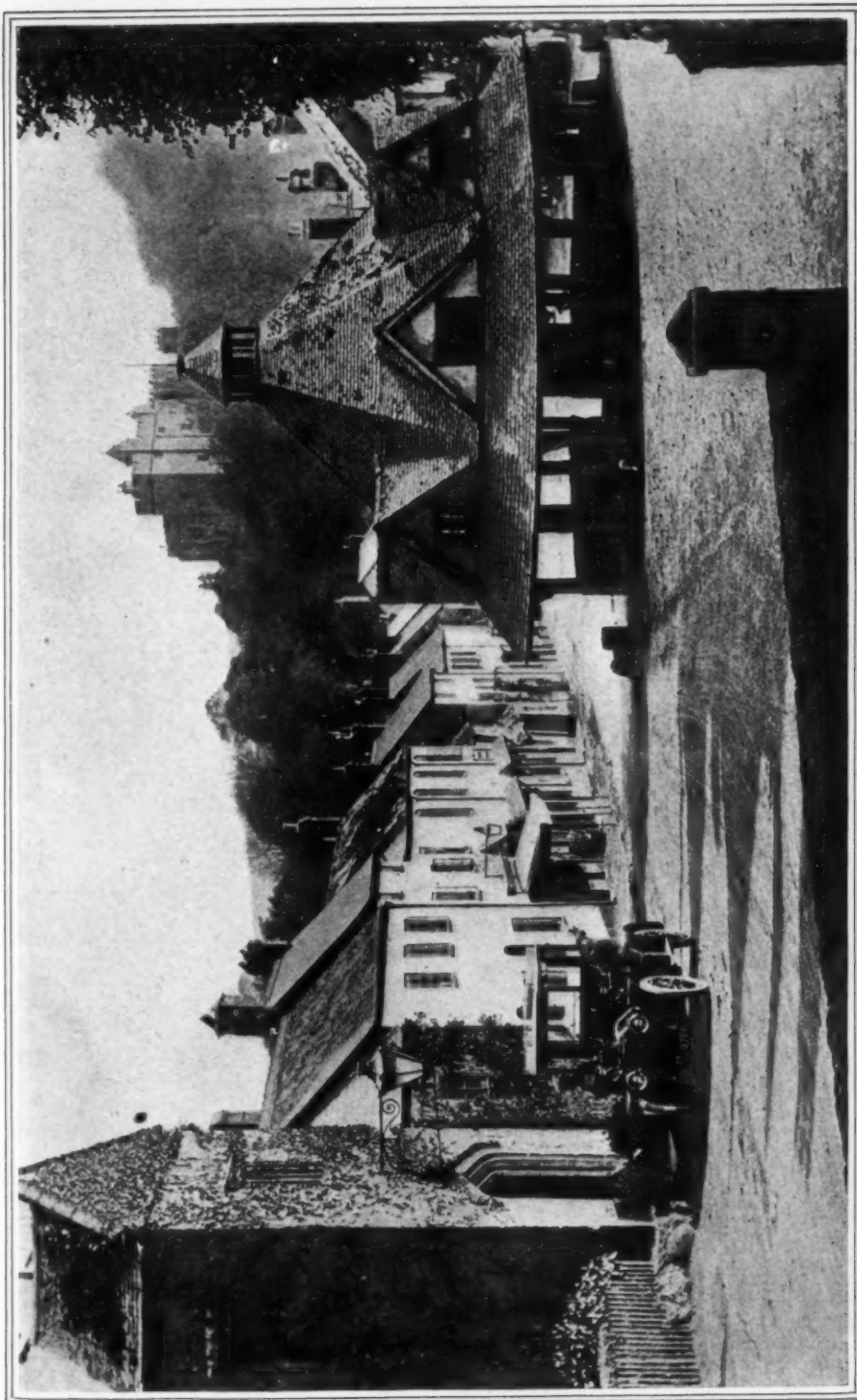
THE OBSERVANT TOURIST FINDS AN EPITOME OF ENGLAND'S LONG HISTORY IN HER CASTLES AND ABBEYS, HER TOWN WALLS AND COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS, HER OLD INNS AND WAYSIDE CROSSES

By Ernest C. Pulbrook

WE have followed our road through the quiet English country, past the stately gates of historic mansions and the picturesque cottages of humble folk, winding between tall hedges in a sheltered valley or striking across the open pastures of a breezy upland. Now we come to a village, a group of houses fringing a wide common or gathered round a green. In the center of the green is a pond, to which the animals come to drink when the day's work

is done, or a well or pump, the meeting-place of idlers, only rivaled by the parlor of the inn.

Other villages line the banks of a little-frequented creek, cling to the slopes of a gorge in the cliffs by the sea, radiate like the spokes of a wheel up the lanes leading from a cuplike hollow, top a ridge—bleak and bare and wind-swept, with stout walls and deep porches to brave the blast—or are so scattered that each cottage stands far



DUNSTER, A PICTURESQUE VILLAGE IN SOMERSETSHIRE—THE CURIOUS BUILDING ON THE RIGHT IS THE OLD YARN MARKET; ON THE HILL ABOVE THE VILLAGE IS A FINE ELIZABETHAN CASTLE



WEST QUANTOXHEAD, NEAR BRIDGEWATER, IN SOMERSETSHIRE—THE VILLAGE CHURCH AND, CLOSE BESIDE IT, THE OLD MANOR-HOUSE, WHICH HAS BELONGED TO THE LUTTRELL FAMILY SINCE THE NORMAN CONQUEST

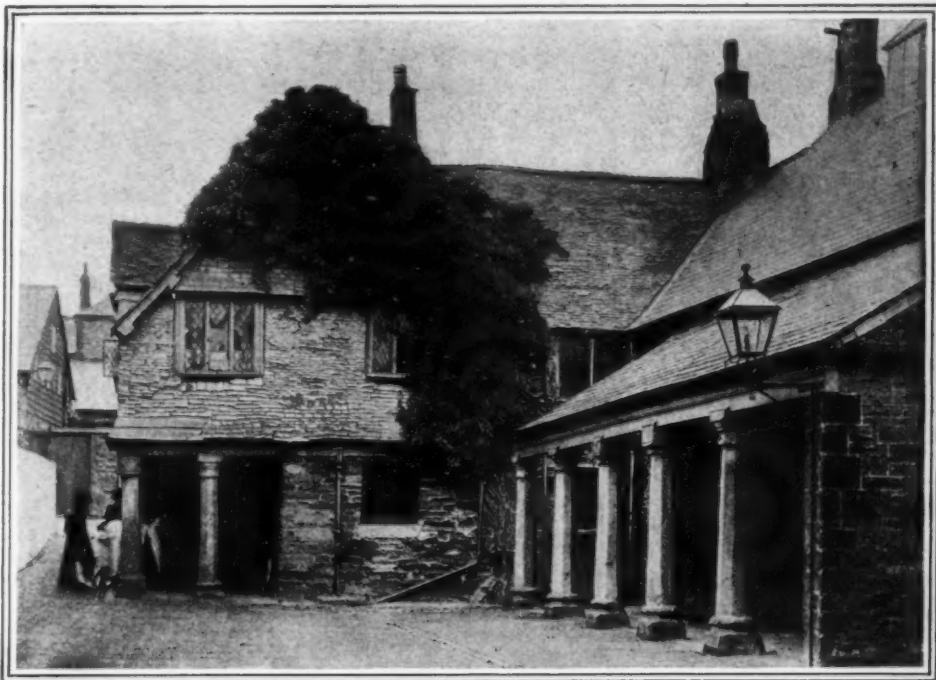


THE SHIP INN AT PORLOCK, ON THE SOMERSETSHIRE COAST, ONCE A FAVORITE HAUNT OF THE POET SOUTHEY

from its neighbor. Here is the inn, whose swinging sign-board often bears a name indicating the character of the place, the chief occupation of its inhabitants, or their adherence to the family whose park is just outside. There stands the schoolhouse, whose attractions depend upon its age. The little shop with its medley of merchandise invites attention; and perhaps in the center

You cannot escape legend and history. This one relates a libelous story that here Shakespeare was once found drunk in the porch of the inn. That one recounts that the landlocked sea which washes its shores was the scene of Canute's command to the waves to go back; and a third witnessed Hampden's stand against ship-money.

Trees half conceal the village church,



THE OLD GILDHALL AT TOTNES, IN DEVONSHIRE, WHICH WAS ONCE PART OF ST. MARY'S PRIORY

of the village is a market-cross—a cross which tells that once upon a time the place was more important than now, when even its oldest inhabitant is unaware that it was ever a busy mart.

Villages there are, all too many, ugly and repellent, from which stranger and native alike flee in disgust; but their number is comparatively few, and often some historical association gives them an attraction they cannot otherwise claim for themselves. As you thread the roads of England, and pass through village after village, you are constantly stumbling in the footsteps of the great—Washington and Shakespeare, Milton and Franklin, Bunyan and Dickens, to mention a few who are the heritage of all the English-speaking race, and whose names come to mind at once.

whose lich-gate affords glimpses of simple tombstone and massive vault. Here, too, may often be seen names which are household words in America—Washington and Franklin and Penn—and hundreds not so well known outside their own locality. Penn and his Quaker friends rest in no ordinary churchyard, but in the sequestered graveyard of the old meeting-house amid the trees in a quiet Buckinghamshire valley, marked only by the tiniest of headstones put up not so long ago.

The churches, too, bear the stamp of their own neighborhood. Sussex and part of Hampshire show red roofs and shingle spires; Somerset rejoices in beautiful towers; Devon and Cornwall in finely carved screens and bench-ends; Suffolk has its unique round towers.

Here is a church as beautiful as it is large—much too large for present requirements, but erected in a day when the district was far more populous than now. There we find a noble house of prayer erected by a wealthy merchant. Some were built as a thank-offering for success, or for some marvelous deliverance; others as an expiation for sin, such as those reputed to owe their origin to the murderers of Becket.

the red-brick house of Georgian times inhabited by the doctor, which is flanked on the other side by a modern store brilliant with brass and plate glass.

Here is an ancient inn, long and low, with an archway giving access to a yard and an extensive range of stabling. Almost opposite is one of those large, comfortable-looking places from which the modern hotel has descended, entered by a square, pillared

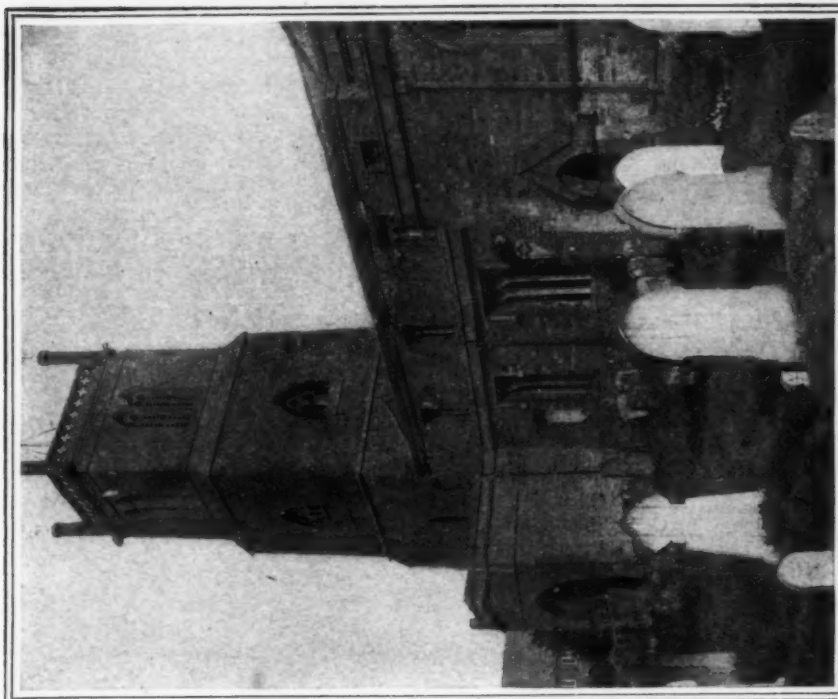


MERMAID STREET, RYE, A QUAIN OLD STREET UP WHICH THE COACHES USED TO CLIMB—RYE, IN SUSSEX, WAS ONE OF THE CINQUE PORTS, BUT ITS HARBOR LONG AGO SILTED UP

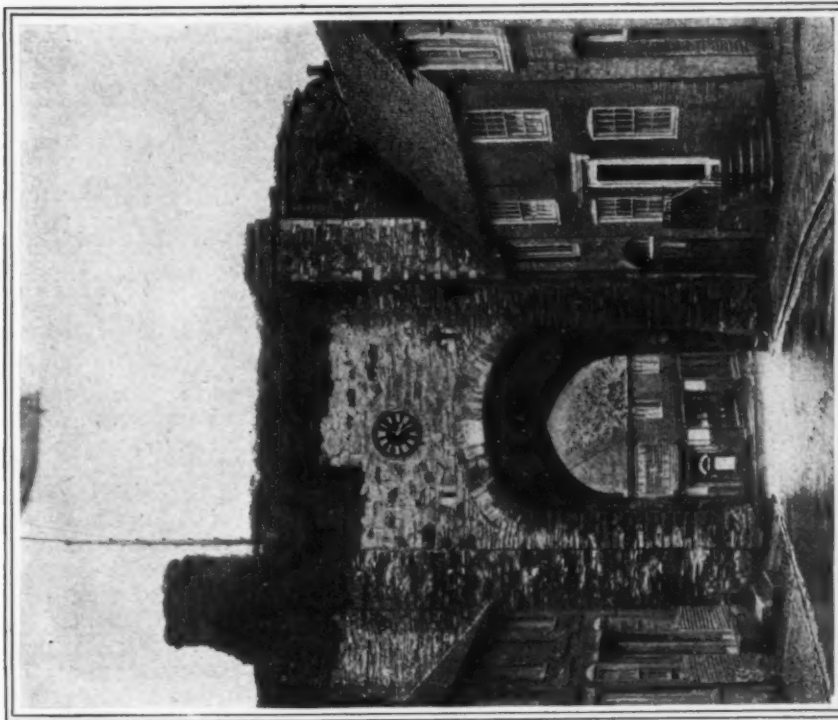
In one district nearly every churchyard possesses its cross, often far older than the building itself, for it marks the spot where the Gospel was first preached. In another, never a cross is to be found.

From the village the road winds on down the valley until it comes to the town—perhaps a sleepy place dominated by a castle on the hill which overlooks it, or perhaps a busy place of trade and industry. Its main street is sure to be diversified with buildings of varied style and age. A shop with round bay windows broken up into little panes, and an overhanging upper story, stands next

portico, over which strides a lion or other strange beast. Off the High Street are quiet squares and streets of residential houses of equally different styles and ages. Prim Queen Anne and Georgian dwellings stand behind walls or iron railings hammered into artistic shape by the craftsmen of their time, with here and there an older building with deep porches and mullioned windows, or the very latest example of the modern builder's style. Such contrasts of the old and new are seen in almost every street, unless the place be one of those which fell asleep a century ago and have not yet awakened.



THE VILLAGE CHURCH AT ECTON, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE—FOR MANY GENERATIONS ECTON WAS THE HOME OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S ANCESTORS, AND SEVERAL OF THEM ARE BURIED IN THE VILLAGE CHURCHYARD

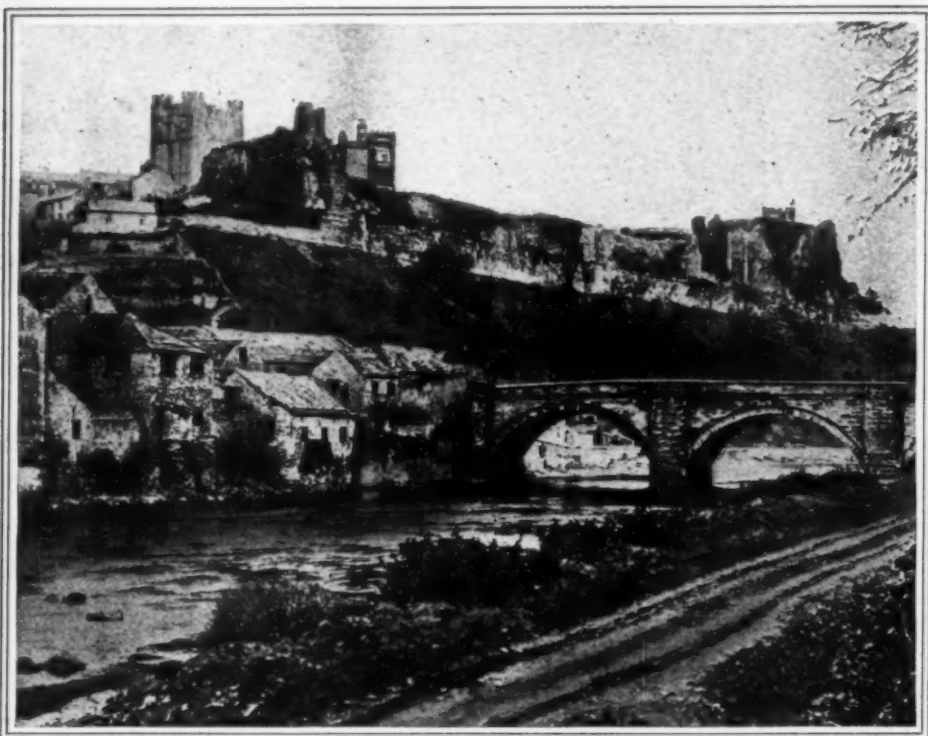


THE LAND GATE, RYE, THE ONLY EXISTING PORTION OF THE TOWN WALLS—VERY FEW ENGLISH TOWNS RETAIN THEIR ANCIENT WALLS, BUT IN MANY CASES ONE OR MORE OF THE GATES REMAIN

Perhaps it is a fortified town of medieval times, surrounded by a wall, which we enter through a massive gateway still bearing the slit for a portcullis. The wall has been breached in many places to make room for houses, and steep lanes and flights of steps lead up to courtyards entered by passages beneath overhanging upper stories. In such towns the streets are narrow and tortuous,

whose name is indicative of the commodities formerly sold there.

In the older market-places stands the cross, a graceful shaft set on a flight of steps, a noble Gothic structure of statues and pinnacles, or a covered building surmounted by a cross. Many of these have been swept away by vandals who considered such objects of beauty in the way, and ruth-



RICHMOND, A PICTURESQUE LITTLE TOWN IN NORTHERN YORKSHIRE, WITH THE OLD BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER SWALE, AND THE IMPOSING RICHMOND CASTLE ON THE HILL ABOVE THE TOWN

for the houses were huddled close together inside the walls. Seen from the belfry, or from the top of the entrance tower, it presents a delightful expanse of roofs and gables.

The railroad does not approach too closely, but before its coming the coach made light of the steep ascent, and cantered up the cobbles to the inn with much tooting of the horn. Elsewhere the main street is so wide that a battalion might almost march along it in extended order. In the center of the town is a still broader space, where the weekly market is held; or maybe its trade has passed, leaving a market-house

lessly pulled them down or sold them to the highest bidder—who sometimes took them away to reerec elsewhere. Winchester nearly lost its cross in this manner, but the citizens interfered at the last moment. The Poultry Cross at Salisbury is said to have been erected by a knight in atonement for a sacrilege. Another cathedral town, Chichester, possesses a fine structure of early Tudor days, still called the Market Cross, though the cross itself was long ago replaced by a bell turret.

The covered market-crosses are more common in the south than in the north of England, but wherever found are usually



MILTON'S VILLAGE, CHALFONT ST. GILES, IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE—THE HOUSE IN WHICH THE POET FINISHED "PARADISE LOST" IS NOW A MILTON MUSEUM



A VILLAGE IN SHAKESPEARE'S COUNTRY—HAMPTON LUCY, NEAR STRATFORD-ON-AVON, A COMMUNITY WHICH HAS CHANGED LITTLE SINCE THE GREAT DRAMATIST'S DAY

a sign that the market rights once belonged to a bishop or an abbot. Before the market opened a brief service was held from the steps, and here the market tolls were paid and public announcements given out.

More modern are the market-houses, the earliest of which date from the seventeenth

more the road continues through the open country—past broad meadows which have yielded fat grazing for a thousand years; past corn-fields with hedgerows dividing the landscape into checkers of all shapes and sizes; past swelling open land where the billowing fields are denoted only by the



AN OLD VILLAGE INN WITH THATCHED ROOF AND HANGING SIGN—THE OTHER OLD THATCHED BUILDING ON THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE IS THE SCHOOLHOUSE

century. They usually consist of an upper story set on pillars, and occasionally they possess a small lock-up in the corner of the market space beneath.

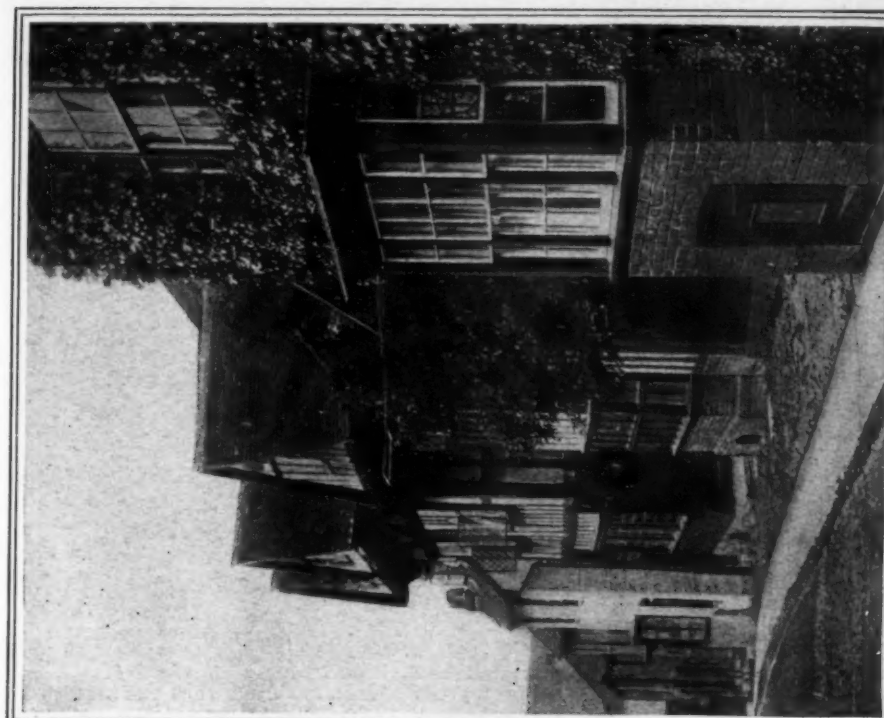
Other buildings of the market-towns are town halls; gild-houses of the trades; ancient homes of the merchants who built up their prosperity, often degraded to base purposes and sadly misused, but not totally defaced; almshouses erected by these merchants; mills spanning a stream, and perhaps an electric-light plant which was a cloth-mill before the industry shifted to other parts of the country.

These towns are soon explored, and once

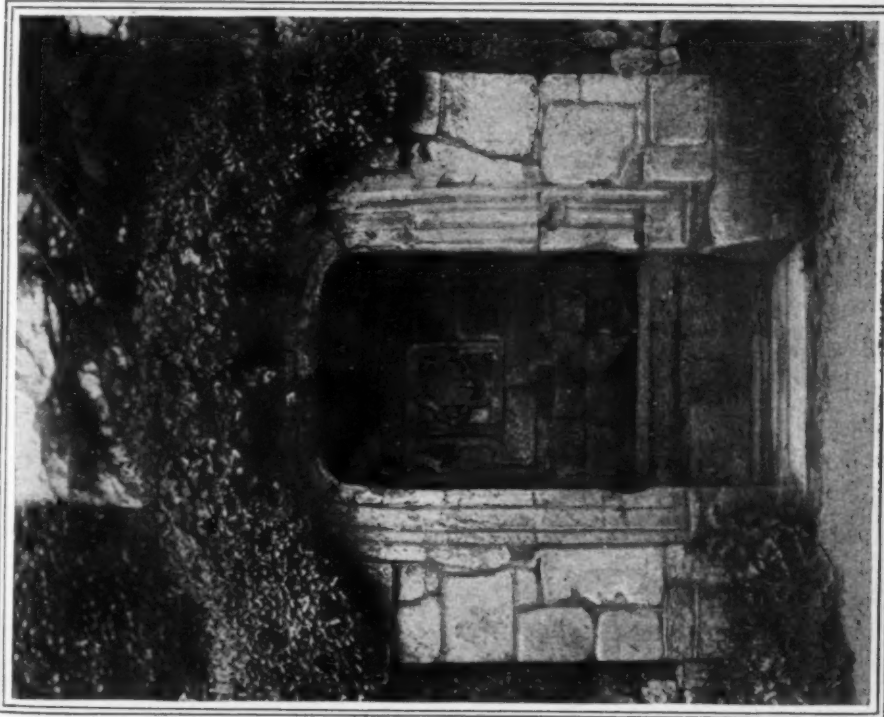
crops they grow. Perhaps the way runs along the foot of a downland ridge, whose lower slope rises in steps of narrow terraces one above the other, relics of the ancient system of tillage when the plow was always driven in one direction.

Where springs are abundant wells are common—a dipping well beneath the bank supplying water to a cottage, or a holy well covered by a chapel-like structure. Some are reputed to cure certain ailments; to others are ascribed more miraculous powers in which the old folks still believe.

Here the old toll-houses command every crossroad, though they are fast being de-



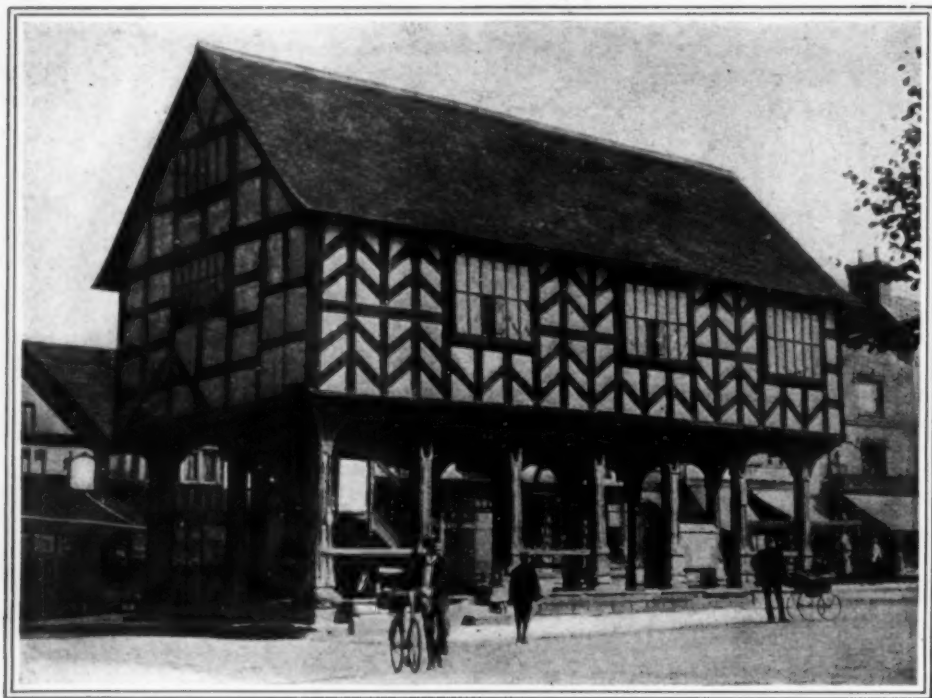
A PICTURESQUE TIMBERED HOUSE WITH THREE PROJECTING GABLES, THE DWELLING OF AN OLD-TIME MERCHANT IN A MEDIEVAL ENGLISH TOWN



AN OLD COVERED WELL BY THE WAYSIDE—SOME OF THESE ARE SUPPOSED TO CURE CERTAIN DISEASES, OR TO POSSESS MIRACULOUS POWERS



AN ANCIENT VILLAGE MARKET-CROSS WHERE IN OLD DAYS PRAYERS WERE SAID BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE MARKET



THE MARKET-HOUSE AT LEDBURY, IN HEREFORDSHIRE, BUILT IN 1633, ONE OF THE OLDEST STRUCTURES OF ITS KIND IN ENGLAND

molished. If you wander far enough, a May-pole may be seen or a memorial to a crime that thrilled the country.

Old inn, old battle-field, old abbey, old monument—England is full of them. Here and there is a huge horse or a gigantic figure cut in the escarpment of the chalk, whose origin is lost in the mist of ages. Another of these strange landmarks is the great cross in the Chilterns, said to be a mammoth sign-post guiding travelers to a gap in the

on England, one is glad to know. Only thus will you learn to know the real England, with all its prejudices and its virtues, its characteristics good and bad.

The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farmhouses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens; along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about the country churches; attend wakes



A VERY OLD STONE COTTAGE—NOTE THE WIDE, DEEP PORCH AND THE THATCHED ROOF, TIME-WORN AND PATCHED

hills; and there are some more modern ones, representing George III on horseback, or a crown to commemorate Queen Victoria's jubilee.

The observant tourist will mark varieties of plow, of spade, of wagon, of methods of work. He will notice that in one part of England all the carts have blue bodies and red wheels, while elsewhere they are painted a clayey buff resembling khaki. The sickle and the harvester may be used in the same field at harvest-time, and in the hilly western counties corn is sometimes carried to the rick on wooden sledges.

Lastly, the character and appearance and speech of the folk may be observed; for uniformity of dialect has not yet been forced

and fairs, and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions, and all their habits and humors.

So wrote a famous American author just a hundred years ago, the passage quoted being the opening paragraph of Washington Irving's "Rural Life in England," which forms part of his "Sketch Book." And just as Irving in his time did much to interpret England and America to each other, so to-day the thousands of American soldiers who have been in English training-camps, or in English hospitals recovering from wounds, have not only learned something of England and its ordinary people, but have been missionaries teaching the Englishman better acquaintance with America.



LOLA FISHER, IN A SCENE FROM CLARE KUMMER'S CLEVER COMEDY, "BE CALM, CAMILLA"

From a photograph by White, New York

THE STAGE

A DASH OF SHAKESPEARE IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS, WITH AN ATTEMPT TO
ACCOUNT FOR HIS ALLEGED UNPOPULARITY

By Matthew White, Jr.

THE happiness reflected from the faces of New York theatrical folk as the year of the armistice came to its close was not wholly due to the throngs that filled the playhouses nightly while awaiting ships bearing returning troops. Shakespeare, too, came in for his innings. Not only did Robert Mantell play a seven-weeks' season of classic repertory which seemed to make more than the usual stir,

but Walter Hampden, resuming his impersonation of *Hamlet*, first essayed at special matinées last spring, found a public so eager to listen to him that an actual run in these Friday afternoon and Saturday morning performances was inaugurated, sandwiched in with Hampden's regular job at the Booth as leading man with Lola Fisher in "Be Calm, Camilla."

Nor was this all. There appeared a

brand-new *Hamlet*, first time on any stage, so that New Yorkers got two fresh impersonators of the melancholy prince within a twelvemonth—neither of them to be despised, either. As a matter of fact, monkeying with the Bard of Avon seems far safer for the men than the women. If you don't believe me, look back at the records hung up—or rather down—by Maude Adams's *Juliet*, Annie Russell's *Puck*, Elsie Ferguson's *Portia*, and the three hapless Shakespearian heroines essayed by Laurette Taylor last spring.

The newest *Hamlet*, also the youngest, is Fritz Leiber, who is only thirty-five years old, and who has been playing with Man-

tell for nine years in parts like *Iago*, *Othello*, *Laertes*, *Mercutio*. Long before these Mantell days he had acted Shakespeare in that prime training-school—stock, beginning with the Dearborn Company, in Chicago, his native city. For three seasons, too, he was with the Ben Greet Players, after which he joined Julia Marlowe.

By courtesy of Mr. Mantell, Leiber played *Hamlet* at a special matinée a week before Christmas, and acquitted himself altogether creditably. In looks he is well fitted for the rôle, resembling our greatest living *Hamlet*—Forbes-Robertson—more than a little. His diction, too, is in the main fine. Possibly, in his efforts to avoid



HELEN HAYES, WHO IS THE WASTREL ARTIST'S DREAM DAUGHTER IN THE SECOND ACT OF BARRIE'S LATEST COMEDY, "DEAR BRUTUS"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York



NONETTE, WHO IS ZAIDA IN THE NEW MUSICAL COMEDY, "SOMEBODY'S SWEETHEART"

From a photograph by Astor, New York

rant, he now and then underplayed a passage; but I think that Shakespeare himself, had he been permitted to revisit the glimpses of the Forty-Fourth Street Theater, would have been well pleased with the impersonation. This in spite of the fact that Heywood Broun, in the *Tribune*, declared that the *Hamlet* title for the year rests with Hampden, while John Corbin, of the *Times*, found that now and then Lei-

ber's enunciation lacked purity, and that his voice had no great variety or range.

I am recording my idea of what Shakespeare would think had he been able to see Leiber's impersonation as the original creation of the part, and not after persistent playing and comment and dissection and wrangling had incrustated it with traditions three centuries deep.

Of Hampden's *Hamlet*, Mr. Broun wrote



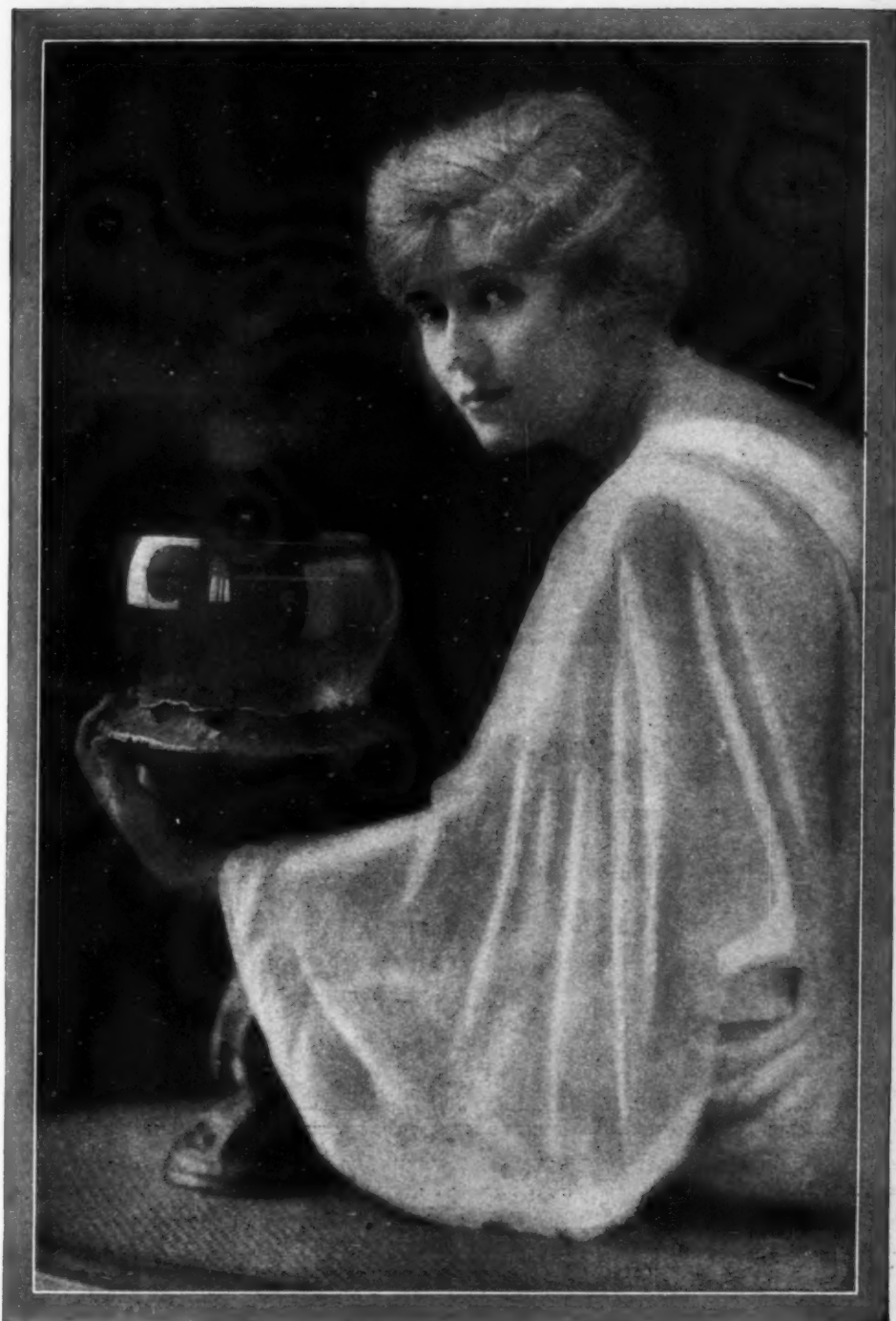
WILDA BENNETT, LEADING WOMAN, AS WIFE TO DONALD BRIAN, IN THE MUSICAL-COMEDY HIT,
"THE GIRL BEHIND THE GUN"

From her latest photograph by Geisler & Andrews, New York



BEATRICE NICHOLS AND FRANK BACON IN A SCENE FROM THE BIG COMEDY HIT, AT NEW YORK'S GAIETY THEATER, "LIGHTNIN'"

From a photograph by White, New York



VIOLET HEMING, LEADING WOMAN IN THE MYSTERY WAR PLAY, "THREE FACES EAST,"
HAVING AN ALL-SEASON RUN AT THE COHAN & HARRIS THEATER

From her latest photograph by Campbell, New York



HELEN FORD, AS SHE APPEARS IN THE MUSICAL-COMEDY SUCCESS, "SOME TIME"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

last spring that it was somewhat "set and mature," yet admirable in performance, because of the richness of his reading. Mr. Corbin calls it a highly distinguished rendering, but deplors Hampden's tendency to think of the melancholy prince rather as a character than as part of a play.

Walter Hampden is a native of Brooklyn, but did most of his acting in England until

he brought Charles Rann Kennedy's "Servant in the House" to this country in manuscript form, ten years ago, and played *Manson*, the name-part, with such success. He appeared with Nazimova in Ibsen pending final arrangements for the presentation of the Kennedy piece. In England he had acted with the Frank Benson players, and in due course reached the London Adelphi



JULIETTE DAY, WHO HAS A LIVELY PART IN THE PRINCESS THEATER MUSICAL COMEDY,
"OH, MY DEAR!"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York



ENID BENNETT, STARRED IN THE PARAMOUNT PICTURE, "FUSS AND FEATHERS"

From a copyrighted photograph by the Evans Studio, Los Angeles

in "The Song of the Sword"; but his longest training was in Shakespeare.

Following the extended run of "The Servant in the House," he appeared in the short-lived "Winterfeast," also by Mr. Kennedy, and then created a prominent rôle in Clyde Fitch's posthumous production, "The City." He was the *Caliban* in the notable performance of "The Tempest" at the Century, and shortly thereafter went into comedy, in this way coming to be cast for Clare Kummer's initial success—also in association with Lola Fisher—"Good Gracious Annabelle."

Reverting to *Hamlet*, it may be interesting to recall the comments made when E. H. Sothern, now retired, made his first appearance in the rôle—which happened at the Garden Theater on September 17, 1900.

The *Times* thought that in its general discretion the portrayal recalled that of Edwin Booth, but that it lacked the force, the thrill, and the uplifting effect of great tragic acting. The *Sun* averred that the performance was a disappointment "only to those who had predicted that Sothern would come an awful cropper in the rôle. As a matter of fact, Mr. Sothern was not only a good *Hamlet*, but he gave what was without doubt the best piece of acting of his career." Alan Dale called it a "distinctively nineteenth-century *Hamlet*, a cozy, gentle, declamatory person 'enjoying' bad health."

The *Ophelia* was Virginia Harned, at that time Mrs. Sothern. The *Rosencranzs*, I find from a glance at the cast, was an actor whom you have come to know in quite an-

other line of work—Taylor Holmes, the star of "His Majesty Bunker Bean."

As I said at the outset, Shakespeare is decidedly looking up this season—a pleasant contrast to my lament last June, when I found that during the season then closing there had been only two brief showings of him in New York. In this theatrical year, besides the two *Hamlets* already mentioned, we have already had Mantell's *Hamlet*, also his appearances in "Romeo and Juliet," "King Lear," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Macbeth."

As I sat watching "Hamlet" unfold itself, the other afternoon, I kept asking myself why it was that people didn't enjoy Shakespeare, and reached the conclusion that they only imagine that they don't. I verily believe that it is his commentators

who have been the undoing of this master dramatist so far as his being a best-seller is concerned. Why not quit disputing as to what this or that sentiment may mean, and let the author speak for himself?

Shakespeare should have the best equipment, not only in cast, but in scenery and effects, that is possible. And take him out of the schoolroom atmosphere. Of all playwrights Shakespeare wrote for the theater. Less talk, then, of the "closet drama."

Barrie has gone to Shakespeare for the title of his latest play, a comedy which ran all season at the London Wyndham's, and which gives every indication of lasting from Christmas until Easter in New York. "Dear Brutus" is very far indeed from being another "Kiss for Cinderella," "Peter Pan," or "Little Minister." Its first and last acts are thoroughly delightful, but the middle one is Barrie at his most obscure. None the less, such is the Barrie



WILLETTE KERSHAW, STARRING IN THE CHICAGO COMPANY PRESENTING
"THE CROWDED HOUR"

From a photograph by Lewis-Smith, Chicago



ROSIE QUINN, ONE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE MIDNIGHT WHIRL ATOP THE CENTURY THEATER, NEW YORK

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

vogue that the cream of the town's theatergoers will cheerfully endure the tedium induced by most of what is said in the magic wood, not only for the sake of the undeniable charm of the other two acts, but because to enjoy Barrie stamps one in the world of drama as does an ability to appreciate Debussy or Glazounoff in music.

"Julius Cæsar" supplied the rather far-fetched name in the lines:

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

The theme is what might have happened had we a chance of living our lives differ-

ently—an idea much used in our theaters of late; but Barrie has chosen to treat the subject at a different angle from either "Eyes of Youth" or "Roads of Destiny." I am inclined to believe that were he not too famous to be amenable to revision, a play-doctor could have swung that weak second act into line with the two admirable ones that precede and follow it. But Barrie, of course, like Shaw, is sacrosanct, and what he has written he has written; so audiences suffer in silence. The actors care not a whit, for what player is there who will quarrel with the words he has to say, provided he has enough of them?

Not only has Barrie borrowed his title from Shakespeare, but the *deus ex machina* in his play is no other than *Puck* of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in modern garb—a cranky old man known as *Lob*. He assembles a house-party of people not very well acquainted with one another for Midsummer eve, the night when fairies are most apt to roam. Then he conjures up the wood in which to have them walk abroad for the mere pleasure of watching the effect that its magic properties will have upon them. A watching more interesting to the audience is that maintained by the first characters in the last act to slough off the woodsy influences as they await the moment when their companions, too, shall wake up to their real selves.

The Charles Frohman management has provided a cast of rare excellence for the interpretation of this whimsy, headed by William Gillette, as the artist who has become a waster through drink, and who is the only one promised a real reform at the end. The part is as far a cry as one could possibly imagine from the head of the American household that Gillette did in "A Successful Calamity." The artist's wife falls to Hilda Spong, who was an important member of that famous old Lyceum stock, and who came back to us three years ago, after an absence in Australia, to play with Arnold Daly in his revival of "Candida."

Sam Sothern—brother of E. H.—has the same part in "Dear Brutus" that he had in the London production, and *Matey*, the thieving butler, gets a capital interpreter in Louis Calvert, who was *Sir Toby* in "Twelfth Night," *Falstaff* in "The Merry Wives," and *Sir Peter* in "The School for Scandal," during the seasons of 1910-1911 at the New Theater. But most of the good notices went to almost an unknown, in the person of the girl, Helen Hayes, the artist's dream daughter. Miss Hayes was on Broadway briefly last autumn as *Penrod's* sister in the Booth Tarkington play, and before that she acted *Pollyanna* on the road. For the rest, she is a native of Washington, where she had her early training in the Columbia and Poli stock companies.

Also on the "Dear Brutus" roster is that sterling actress of the old school, Marie Wainwright, who made her first appearance as *Juliet*, no less, at the old Booth's Theater in New York, on May 17, 1877, in support of the English star, George Rignold. Although she began her career in Shake-

speare, and was destined to play many Shakespearian parts, Miss Wainwright did not hesitate, the very next year, to jump into comic opera, for she is down on the records as the first American *Josephine* in Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pinafore." This was sung at the Boston Museum.

She was also the first American *Countess Zicka* in Sardou's "Diplomacy." After that she spent five years as lead with Lawrence Barrett, and, after appearing in the classics for several seasons with Louis James, in 1886 she became leading woman with the Booth-Salvini combination. This was followed by a starring tour in "Amy Robsart." Back again with Gillette, she is only resuming a relationship that began with the mother in "Samson," in 1908, and continued with her *Mrs. General Varney*, in "Secret Service," in 1911. More recently she was the *Mother Superior* with Frances Starr in "Marie-Odile."

It is a Shakespearian character that gives title to the most important revival of the season at the Metropolitan Opera House—Weber's "Oberon," not heard in New York since 1870. It was produced in English, between Christmas and New Year's, with all the pomp and circumstance afforded by Urban scenery, to which its fairy story lends itself admirably.

For the prima donna rôle, Rosa Ponselle was selected—the second appearance at the Metropolitan of this young American girl of twenty-two from Meriden, Connecticut, who, a year ago, was doing a sister act in vaudeville. A music-teacher chanced to see her work, realized the possibilities in her voice, and after four months of training contrived to get a hearing for her from Mr. Gatti, with the result that in the first week of opera, last November, she scored heavily as *Leonora* in Verdi's "Forza del Destino."

Grand opera would appear to be in the way of losing its tragic note. "Oberon" has a happy ending, and recent novelties at the Metropolitan have tended to librettos of a lighter sort. Of the three Puccini one-act offerings that had their world *première* on Broadway on December 14, "Gianni Schicchi," which is comedy, made the most favorable impression.

With the war over, we may look for more wonderful results than ever on the stage of what is now without dispute the world's foremost temple of music. "Faust" has been restored to the repertory with Farrar

as *Marguerite*, and a new running-mate has been found for the perennial "Cavalleria" in "Coq d'Or," last season's novelty. And Caruso is still on hand.

A famous tenor, more or less suggestive of John McCormack—who has been singing at the Metropolitan again this winter—is the hero of George M. Cohan's new play for Chauncey Olcott. "The Voice of McConnell," it is called, and I felt well repaid for deserting Broadway to go over to the Manhattan Opera House in Thirty-Fourth Street to see it. Cohan has written three new songs for the production, all typical Irish melodies, and of course Olcott is the man to sing them. And I must add a word on the skilfulness with which they are introduced—not lugged in, but sprouting naturally out of the story itself, which the *Times* reviewer described in these words:

Technically the play is almost perfect, a whole text-book for the aspiring playwright.

Chauncey Olcott was born in Buffalo, fifty-nine years ago, and made his first stage appearance sixteen years later, at the Union Square Theater in New York, as *Pablo* in "Pepita, or the Girl with the Glass Eyes." Surely she must have been some heroine! I wonder if Mr. Olcott remembers just what was the trouble. Two years after that he went with Denman Thompson in "The Old Homestead," as *Frank Hopkins*. After a couple of seasons in this rural atmosphere, he switched to the sea, and became *Ralph Rackstraw* in "Pinafore," followed by *Nanki Poo* in "The Mikado." A period in London for the study of music ensued, and on his return, some twelve years later, he started his series of Irish parts by starring in "Ma-vourneen."

A JOURNEY WORTH TAKING

A comedy, well written, well acted, and well placed in the Little Theater is "A Little Journey," by Rachel Crothers. It may not achieve the popularity of her "Old Lady 31," but one comes away with a satisfying sense of having spent one's time with real types who have no odor of the footlights about them. What is more, one gets full measure of drama, not the scant story, threatening to collapse at every scene, so frequently offered us of late years. The only thing that collapses in "A Little Journey" is the sleeper in which the first two acts are laid.

Cyril Keightley—the rugged man of the West who pays the heroine's fare when she loses her ticket—is an English actor whom the late Charles Frohman brought to America in 1908, to be leading man for Billie Burke in the latter's first starring venture, "Love Watches." Of him Mr. Frohman said at the time:

"He reminds me more of the late Maurice Barrymore—Ethel's father—than any other actor has ever done."

"Mr. Keightley has dignity, poise, and a sense of humor," one of the next day's reviewers said of him.

Four years afterward he attracted fresh attention by his admirable performance of the lead in the all-man play, "The New Sin." Then he was *Richard Laird* in "The Song of Songs," and two seasons later he acted the lead in the surprise comedy, "Cheating Cheaters."

Estelle Winwood, heroine of "A Little Journey," is likewise from England. She came over two years ago to play in "Hush," which lived only a little longer than its name at the Little Theater. Last season she was fortunate to be chosen for the feminine lead in that clever comedy, "Why Marry?"

Most of the laughs in "A Little Journey" go to Jobyna Howland, who started her career by appearing with James K. Hackett as *Princess Flavia* in "Rupert of Hentzau," the sequel to "The Prisoner of Zenda." This was just twenty years ago, and Miss Howland came to the stage from being C. D. Gibson's model for the illustrations to the book. Nine years later she married Arthur Stringer, the story-writer.

A FARCE WITH A STRANGE DRAWBACK

"Keep It to Yourself" keeps its audiences laughing all the evening except at the two important curtains. In farce, of all forms of plays, the climax is most important, and it is odd indeed to note that in Mark Swan's clever adaptation from the French, which involves a bride and groom and a too-easy subject for hypnotism, the flat moments are those which come just before curtain-fall in the first and second acts. Surely it would be easy to remedy the defect by dropping the curtain an instant or two sooner in each case.

However, I think this is not going to interfere with the run of the funniest farce I have seen since "Fair and Warmer." Edwin Nicander is featured as the hyp-

notist, and Alphonz Ethier looks a stalwart bridegroom to the life. Both men had their training in hard-working, twelve-performances-a-week stock. Dallas Welford as *Charlie*, the forgetful waiter, is another constant provider of mirth. He is an English comedian at whom one has but to look to laugh. He came here to play "Mr. Hopkinson" in 1906, and you saw him last about a year ago as the apoplectic in "Sick Abed."

ANOTHER "THIRTEEN" KNOCK-OUT

"But look here, you can't do that! It's a bit too—well, too swift, don't you think?"

"All right. We'll do it anyway, and call the thing melodrama. Even Belasco's producing that these days."

I can imagine some such conversation taking place between the two collaborators on "The Woman in Room Thirteen." The result of acting on the second man's suggestion is one of the season's smashing hits, to which the smart set is flocking in throngs. Samuel Shipman and Max Marcin, both associated with previous successes—"Friendly Enemies" and "Cheating Cheaters," to name only two—give their audience good measure, too, in a prologue and four acts, with a cast of seventeen people, while A. H. Woods has stinted nothing on the producing end. There are Janet Beecher, Lowell Sherman, Gail Kane, Will Deming, and Charles Waldron, to say nothing of a novelty in scenic effects which may well make the movies hustle a bit as they see the legitimate crowding them closer in the matter of swift transitions from room to room.

The play starts off with a bang. There's no "planting" of clues to the character of its chief personages before they appear, but Miss Beecher and Lowell Sherman are shown straight off the bat on the edge of their divorce. She has another husband—Charles Waldron—in the other acts, a husband with whom No. 1 has voted to get even, if it takes a lifetime to do it. There is a court-room scene as effective, thanks to the new device, as it is brief, and while lacking the characterization of "Within the Law" and the mystery element of "The Thirteenth Chair," the newer play is not so very distantly related to both of these in the matter of thrills.

Janet Beecher comes to "The Woman in Room Thirteen" after a period of rest following the abrupt withdrawal of "Double

Exposure" last autumn, and Gail Kane returns to the speaking stage from a somewhat lengthy lingering in pictures. Lowell Sherman was in "The Knife," and Charles Waldron, one of the many clever graduates of the old Murray Hill stock, was the hero in "Daddy Longlegs." As the second husband he replaces the late John Mason, who was taken ill after only one performance on the road. Will Deming, you will recall, scored heavily in "Where Poppies Bloom," which was laid aside to permit of Marjorie Rambeau's return to "Eyes to Youth," preparatory to a season in London.

LORD DUNSANY'S LATEST

Personally I am not partial to "nut" plays—beloved of the long-haired men and short-haired women who have turned Greenwich Village into a freak section of Manhattan. A typical specimen is "A Night in Avignon," by Cale Rice Young, the first playlet on the bill at the Punch and Judy Theater, where Stuart Walker has inaugurated his new Portmanteau season. When I tell you that the pantomime by which it was followed seemed far more comprehensible to the majority of the audience, you may imagine the boredom induced by this latest effort of a man whom the program calls "one of the foremost of America's poets."

The pantomime, "Stingy," was written by Maxwell Parry, an aviator of the A. E. F., who disappeared on July 8 last after bringing down two German machines. Herbert E. Hyde has fitted descriptive music to this children's entertainment that adds a hundred per cent to its effectiveness; but of course the *pièce de résistance* of the bill is Lord Dunsany's "The Laughter of the Gods," in three short acts.

I do not agree with those who think the new play inferior to Dunsany's "Gods of the Mountain." It reveals a keener insight into foibles that are as common to-day as they were in the time of Babylon's decadence, the period of the piece, which turns on the disgust of the courtiers when the king insists on removing his capital to a jungle city. Three of them, egged on by their wives, induce a prophet to foretell the impending doom of the new capital, hoping to induce the monarch to return to the flesh-pots of happier days; but the king refuses to heed the warning, and the gods, to have the laugh on the court folk who have ignored them, destroy the city as pre-

dicted, although originally they had no such intention.

Stuart Walker has supplied a striking setting for this sterling bit of dramatic work, to which his company, headed by George Gaul—the colored man in “Seventeen,” and *Job* in the dramatization of the Bible story—McKay Morris, Elizabeth Patterson, and Margaret Mower do full justice. Lord Dunsany, whose family name is Plunkett, saw active service in South Africa and again in the war with Germany. As a playwright he was first introduced to this country at the Neighborhood Playhouse in Grand Street, May 13, 1916, with “A Night at an Inn,” the first in his “Great Gods” trilogy.

A QUARTET OF BOOK PLAYS

“Tillie,” a comedy of the Pennsylvania Dutch, is the sort of play that usually has hard sledding on Broadway. Patricia Collinge’s fascinating impersonation of the heroine may pull it through, as Mrs. Fiske did a few years since with “Erstwhile Susan,” a play based on another of Helen Martin’s novels about the Mennonite folk. The last act is capital, but that is rather a small average of merit when you consider that there are three other acts.

Like Lord Dunsany, Patricia Collinge is Irish. She came to New York when she was sixteen, her first part here being that of a flower-girl in “The Queen of the Moulin Rouge.” After a period of struggle she became *Youth* in “Everywoman.” Later, her work as leading woman with Douglas Fairbanks and William H. Crane in “The New Henrietta” caused her to be recognized by first-nighters when she came before them again in “The Show Shop” and “He Comes Up Smiling,” Fairbanks’s last bouts with the legitimate before he capitulated to pictures. Instead of following him in that direction, Miss Collinge proceeded to preach the gospel of gladness up and down the land as *Pollyanna*.

Along with “Tillie,” several other by-products of books reached the stage—one of them, “The Melting of Molly,” with musical trimmings. Broadway has been threatened with this, for lo, these several years, and I cannot truthfully say that it has been deprived of much in the waiting. In a season that gives us Gilbert and Sullivan so well done by the American Singers at the Park, a musical show must be above the average to get by.

Another capture from the types for the footlights is “Cappy Ricks,” starring Tom Wise and William Courtenay jointly. Each of these gentlemen has had his failure since September, Mr. Wise with “Mr. Barnum” and Mr. Courtenay with “The Maid of the Mountains,” although in each case the individual added to his reputation. It is to be hoped that their reunion may bring them the good luck that attended their venture in another book play, “Pals First.”

The crowning metamorphosis has been wrought by George Cohan. Summoned as first aid to the struggling in fitting for the stage “A Prince There Was”—dramatized from the story “Enchanted Hearts,” and starring Robert Hilliard—he insisted on banishing so much of the fantastic in favor of the practical that Hilliard got out soon after the run started. Cohan took the part himself as a stop-gap, and decided to keep it when what had threatened to prove a flivver turned out a success.

DITRICHSTEIN IN SERIOUS VEIN

The French do these things gracefully. I shudder to think what might have happened to our sensibilities had “The Marquis de Priola” been the work of an English-speaking playwright. This is the drama from the French of Henri Lavedan in which Leo Ditrichstein returns to New York under his own management.

Attached to the Italian embassy in Paris, the marquis knows no greater joy than to break women’s hearts. In the night and day during which we see him through the eyes of M. Lavedan, he worsts two of them—one the wife from whom he had been divorced—and is himself worsted by a third. He seeks to launch his adopted son on the same career of cruelty, but at the final curtain he faces twenty years of paralysis and blindness, the result of his excesses. Ditrichstein portrays the man with masterly strokes, both of voice, gesture, and physiognomy, and the character is likely to live in his repertory as *Baron Chevrier* did in Mansfield’s.

In the supporting cast are no fewer than three leading women—Jane Grey, Lily Cahill, and Katherine Emmett, while as the son, Brandon Tynan has a rôle of high importance. It is claimed that he seems too old for it—which recalls the well-known dictum regarding *Juliet*, to the effect that no actress has the ability to play the character until she is too old to look it.

The Odd Measure

A Blind Man Who Works for the Blind

*Sir Arthur Pearson,
Founder of St.
Dunstan's Hostel*

TEN or twelve years ago many Americans knew Sir Arthur Pearson as a man who had made his own way to the front in London journalism, and as one of the active forces in English public affairs. Then the current of his life was turned by what seemed a tragic misfortune—the failure of his sight. He has since found a new career and a new sphere of usefulness in devoting himself to the welfare of others who have suffered the same loss. He has become an expert and a pioneer in this field, and has made his training-school in London, St. Dunstan's Hostel, a model which many teachers of the blind have studied and imitated.

Sir Arthur recently visited the United States and Canada, to confer with those in charge of work for American and Canadian soldiers blinded in the great war. While in New York he gave an interesting talk about his ideas, and told stories to show how unintelligent the usual methods of dealing with sightless people have been. They have either been treated as if they had lost all their faculties at once, or as if they possessed supernatural and uncanny powers. He cited the case of a well-meaning English attendant who used to help him get a swim.

"Now, sir, the steps," the man would say. "There are four of them. One, sir; two, sir; three, sir; four, sir"—as if a blind man could not possibly count four.

And then, when they got back to the dressing-room, the attendant would announce:

"Here we are, sir—your clothes on your right, sir, and the looking-glass on your left!"

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The Vexed Question of the Dalmatian Littoral

*Why Italy Wants a
Foothold on the
Eastern Shore of
the Adriatic*

THE question of Dalmatia and the eastern coast of the Adriatic is one of the most tangled of all the problems of delimitation with which the peace conference in Paris has to deal.

As far back as history goes, that country was inhabited by Illyrian peoples who had moved westward from beyond the Balkans, and who brought corn and the vine with them from the east. Its modern name is derived from one of their settlements, Dalminium, in what is now Herzegovina. About seven centuries before Christ, Phœnician and Greek traders came adventuring up the Adriatic in their galleys, and established colonies in the islands and on the coast. Thus was begun the Hellenization of the Adriatic Sea border. There had been no conquest save penetration by trade.

The first contact with the power of Rome came about 230 B.C., but it was not until the reign of Augustus that the stubborn Illyrians were finally subdued. Their territory became a rich Roman province, and two famous emperors—Aurelian and Diocletian—were born within its borders.

The decline of the empire opened the way for the invader, and in 493 the Ostrogoths came. In the sixth century Constantinople, as the heir of Rome, asserted her dominion for a time; but her rule was submerged by a new wave of barbarians, the fierce Avars, who left the country a desert behind them. Then came the Slavs, and Dalmatia became part of the first Serbian state, whose crown passed in the twelfth century to Hungary; but Serbian or Slavic the land remains to this day. Its history through the Middle Ages was a long struggle against the Hungarian and the Turk and a vain effort to stave off the power of Venice over the towns along the coast. The queen city of the Adriatic got full control at the end of the seventeenth century, and retained her sway until her fall in 1797. Austria intervened for a moment, but gave way before the sword of Napoleon, who

first assigned Dalmatia to Italy and then annexed it to France. It went back to Austria when the Corsican conqueror fell.

It is said that under the Roman Empire there were five million inhabitants in Dalmatia; now there are only six hundred thousand. Zara, the capital, like all the coast towns, is typically Venetian in appearance. Its old walls still surround it, and above the principal entrance gate is the winged lion of Venice. It is a busy little town of narrow, crowded streets, barred windows, and low doors; its one industrial specialty is the distilling of maraschino from Dalmatian cherries. Below, the Adriatic plunges in an arm known as the Canal of Zara, protected by the islet of Ugljan, from whose highest point, Monte San Michele, you can look over to Ancona on the coast of Italy.

Italy's shore of the Adriatic is low-lying and has no good harbor between Venice in the north and Brindisi in the south; but her whole fleet could ride in safety in the Zara roadstead. No wonder she is reviving the question of the heritage of Rome and Venice.

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**Damascus, the
Oldest City
in the World**

*Freed from the
Turks, It May
Be the Capital
of an Autonomous
Syria*

THE Arabs say that the first town was Damascus and the last town will be Damascus. When Mohammed from the hill of Salihyeh saw the "rose-red city half as old as time," the pearl set in emerald and washed by the waters of the Barada—the Abana of the Bible—he turned his eyes away lest its beauty should divert his heart from heaven, and his followers exclaimed:

"If paradise be on earth, it is this, it is this!"

To-day the soldiers of a British garrison are within its walls and walk the street called Straight, where Saul of Tarsus tarried in the house of Judas. It is a city of some four hundred thousand inhabitants, on a plateau two thousand feet above the sea, and has seen the rise and fall of many empires—the Assyrian, the Egyptian, the Roman, and now the Ottoman. The straight street still runs through its center, as it did two thousand years ago, but now there are railways—one to Beirut, on the Syrian coast, and the Hedjaz line running far southward to Medina and Mecca.

Before the war, the outer world knew little of Damascus. Now and then a tourist steamer put in at Beirut, and its passengers journeyed inland over the hills; but they saw little of Damascus except the Victoria Hotel, and what the dragoman thought they ought to see. That would include the city gates, which an act of treason opened to the Arabs led by Kalid in 635; the Tangiziya, now a military school; the Ilbogha mosque, which was turned into a biscuit-factory, and the site of the palace of Nureddin, who defeated the crusaders under the walls of Damascus in 1148.

For centuries the ancient city was famous for the temper of its steel blades, but in 1401 Timur, the Tatar conqueror, carried off all the craftsmen skilled in the armorer's art—which had been the gift of the Emperor Diocletian to Damascus. Diocletian's armories were somewhere near the citadel, in the northwest corner of the town, but the exact spot has been forgotten. It was said to be some virtue in the water used in tempering the steel that added to its suppleness.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" said Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Syria, to the Prophet Elisha.

Beirut, the port of Damascus and its rival in picturesqueness, lies at the foot of the fertile slopes of Lebanon, studded with vineyards and groves of pines and mulberries. There is a great American college there, where more than a thousand Armenian, Syrian, and Egyptian boys are trained in medicine and other useful arts.

Six miles from Beirut, on the old road that runs inland, there is an inscription recording the landing of French troops there in 1860, to protect

the Syrian Christians from being massacred by their Moslem neighbors. Beside it are ancient records of conquests of Syria by Rameses, Tiglath-Pileser, and Shalmaniser. Will General Allenby record there the date of his entry into Damascus as the dawn of a new era for a town that was old when vanished Tyre and Sidon were at their prime?

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**Mercantile
Enterprise of
the Retreating
Germans**

*A Story That
Recalls the Man
Who Sold the
Post-Office*

IN the good—or bad—old days when “bunco-steering” was a recognized industry in New York, wonderful stories used to be told of the exploits of certain skilful operators of that classic form of fraud. It was said that one of them, getting hold of a well-to-do farmer, took the countryman to look at a large structure on lower Broadway, where he explained that he owned the building, and that owing to a peculiar combination of circumstances he was offering it for sale to a cash buyer at a bargain price; and he actually ended by getting the farmer to part with a large roll of bills in return for an exceedingly shadowy title to the New York Post-Office.

That story may not be true, but one is forcibly reminded of it by a tale told by a correspondent in Belgium at the time of the German evacuation. It appears that many of the retreating Teutons were disposing of their helmets, rifles, and other portable possessions to any one who would pay a small cash price for such souvenirs; but the most remarkable instance of mercantile enterprise was that of four stragglers near Namur, who had discovered a heavy howitzer abandoned in the grounds of a Belgian *château*. The correspondent found the four Germans offering to sell the huge gun—a ponderous steel structure weighing many tons, complete with limber and caisson—to any one who would pay the trifling sum of fifty marks for it!

It is not recorded, however, that any purchaser cared to undertake the speculation.

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**Even in a
Great War,
Little Things
May Count**

*As the K. of C.
Demonstrated
with Soap and
Towels for Soldiers*

HUMAN nature does not change, and the great war, unprecedented cataclysm as it was, only reemphasized many of the old saws. For instance, that little things count—as the Knights of Columbus discovered within an hour of the opening of their first building in France.

The secretary in charge of the building had carried across with him the usual small trunk-load of supplies, including a few cakes of soap and a half-dozen towels. He had been forewarned that his job would involve a great deal of perspiration—hence, no doubt, his desire for cleansing materials. The Knights had just obtained the sanction of the War Department, through General Pershing, to get into the game of caring for our boys; so this pioneer secretary was put upon his mettle to make a hit for himself and for the organization as a whole.

He got his opportunity in a hurry. A crowd of tired, mud-stained Yankees were coming along a country road after a turbulent “at home” to innumerable Fritzes in the front trenches. They saw the “Everybody Welcome” sign hung above the door of the K. of C. shack—which, in itself, was a unique example of something the Germans had missed in their retreat from that part of the battle-zone. On seeing the sign the boys yelled with surprising energy and made for the door *en masse*.

The secretary welcomed them eagerly, gave them cigarettes and candy, and laid out stationery in case they wished to write to their sisters and their cousins and their aunts. The boys smoked, and chewed candy and gum. They commenced writing letters, and their fingers, grimed by active connection with mother earth in the trenches, gave the letter-paper every evidence of having gone through strenuous proceedings.

One young warrior approached the secretary's littered table.

“You ain't got a glove?” he requested.

“A catcher's glove? Sure!” said the secretary, reaching for one.

“Not that,” said the soldier. “I couldn't write with that on.”

"You want a glove to write with?"

If the boy wanted one, it was up to the secretary to get one, for unwritten instructions to K. of C. workers run along the lines followed by the famous Light Brigade.

"Yes, any old glove will do," said the fighting man, attempting to relieve the secretary's puzzled look. "Any old glove, as long as it's clean. My fingers are making a bad muss of this letter, and I haven't seen soap and water for three days."

The secretary felt the prod of inspiration. Glancing over the packed room, he saw many grimy brows bent over grimy hands that were artistic with the bayonet, if not with the pen.

"Wait just one jiffy," he told the soldier.

Into his trunk he went, and out of the trunk came a towel and soap. The soldier pounced upon them and vanished to the rear of the building, where the rusty handle began to creak on an old pump which—again by some unaccountable neglect—the Germans had left unruined.

Presently he returned, his face beaming after a refreshing douche of suds; and as he flourished his brown, clean hands before the surprised eyes of his companions, questions popped out from all mouths. Smiling and placid, he selected a fresh supply of stationery and recommenced writing. Insistent queries rained upon him. To all he gave a single reply:

"See the sec."

The secretary was stormed. He took the trunk and surrendered it to the clamorous doughboys. There really wasn't much left of the towels by the time the boys were through, and the old pump had rickets in its rheumatic arm; but no soiled letters went home to America from that shack.

That was the small beginning. The secretary wired to K. of C. headquarters in Paris, and K. of C. headquarters in Paris cabled to K. of C. headquarters in America. Thousands of towels and a large shipment of soap traveled just as quickly as transport conditions permitted. Every K. of C. secretary at disembarkation ports, at supply bases, and in the field received his quota, and found plenty of demand for it. This service evolved into something greater, as it was bound to do. The Knights installed shower-baths—batteries of them—and everywhere preached the good doctrine that cleanliness is next to godliness, besides promoting scrappiness.

Which may explain why many thousands of physically clean and mentally cheerful letters have journeyed across the ocean on K. of C. stationery.

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Spartacus of
Rome and
Dr. Spartacus
of Berlin

*Dr. Liebknecht's
Ill-Omened
Choice of a
Pseudonym*

WHY Spartacides, Spartacans, or whatever they are to be called? Why, indeed, the human race should be afflicted with such members as those forming the Spartacus group—younger brothers of the raging Bolsheviki—is a question for wise men to ponder over. But the question why the followers of the late Dr. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg should, of all designations, have chosen that of *Spartacus Leute*, or Spartacus people, is easier to answer.

It appears that some years ago, needing a pseudonym for his political writings, Dr. Liebknecht looked about him for something classic, and, bethinking himself of the rebellious gladiator who gave the Romans so much trouble, thenceforth signed himself "Dr. Spartacus." When the Kaiser's downfall gave him his chance to project himself into the lime-light, he found that his own name lent itself ill to forming the name of a party, whereas "Spartacus" might do well enough. Literally, "Liebknecht" means "dear knave." One can easily see that a band of hotheads stuffed with half-baked ideas of "freedom" would not care to be called knaves of any kind.

At the same time, Dr. Liebknecht might have reflected that his choice of a classical name was scarcely an augury of success. Why did he not hunt a little farther through history and find some rebel who achieved

freedom for himself and his fellows? Spartacus failed miserably. Originally a Thracian robber chief, he was captured, brought to Rome, and trained as a gladiator. He broke loose with some seventy companions, entrenched himself on the slopes of Vesuvius, and, having been joined by many runaway slaves, beat off the attacks of two or three Roman commanders. At the height of his power he is said to have had seventy thousand armed men, and for nearly two years he had southern Italy at his mercy, twice defeating a consular army sent from Rome. Finally Crassus—then a pretor, later a triumvir with Cæsar and Pompey—penned the rebels in the toe of Calabria. Their leader broke out, but could not escape, and died fighting to the last. The insurrection ended in tragedy and horror, for the Romans, to warn their slaves against another revolt, crucified six thousand of Spartacus's followers all along the Appian Way from Rome to Capua.

History repeated itself when Spartacus of Berlin perished miserably.

* * * * *

**The Widow
of Richard
Wagner**

*The Octogenarian
High Priestess of
the Shrine at
Baireuth*

MUSICAL circles everywhere were stirred by the recent report, soon contradicted though it was, of the death at Baireuth, in Bavaria, of Richard Wagner's widow, Frau Cosima Wagner. Since the great war began nothing had been heard of the gaunt old lady who tended the famous composer's shrine so jealously from the time when he died in her arms at Venice, in 1883, until, to her great dismay, his copyrights expired and she lost her autocratic control over the production of his music-dramas. There can be little more for her now than to wait for death and burial beside her husband in the grounds of the Villa Wahnfried, which they built together in 1874.

Born in 1837, few women of her time have led a fuller, more romantic life than this daughter of the famous Hungarian pianist, the Abbé Liszt. Her mother was the runaway wife of the French Comte d'Agoult and the granddaughter of a Jewish banker of Frankfort. Cosima was one of three children born of her union with Liszt, all of whom were legitimated by the priest-musician with the ascetic face, and brought up by his mother.

At the age of twenty, Cosima married one of her father's many "favorite pupils," the concert pianist Hans von Bülow, but the marriage did not prove to be a very happy one. Seven years later, when she met Richard Wagner at Munich, where "Tristan and Isolde" was being given for the first time under the patronage of mad King Louis of Bavaria, she fell in love with him. Wagner had long been separated from his first wife, the unhappy Minna Planer, who died about this time. He was as much taken with Cosima—a splendid musician herself, and an unusually intelligent if not handsome woman—as she with him. Quite naturally, perhaps, she followed her mother's example, and a little later she and Wagner took up their abode together in a villa near Lucerne, in Switzerland. There, in 1869, Cosima bore the composer his only son, Siegfried. Shortly after that event, Hans von Bülow obtained a divorce, and in 1870 she and Wagner were married.

Siegfried Wagner must be a great disappointment to his mother. Long, thin, stoop-shouldered, and unprepossessing in his person, his ability as a musician does not even permit him to conduct his father's music to the satisfaction of the most friendly critics, and his own compositions remain better unheard. From Wagner's son and Liszt's grandson the world and his mother probably expected too much.

Frau Cosima had two daughters before Siegfried was born. Against one of these, shortly before the war, mother and son instituted proceedings to restrain her from placing "*née* Wagner" after her name, claiming that her father was Hans von Bülow. The case was postponed, and apparently has not been heard yet. The lady, whose first name is Isolde, is the wife of Herr Biedler, a conductor at the Munich Opera.

Light Verse

THE HONEST COUNTERFEITER

THE greatest niggard in the universe
Is Time, that miser of eternity,
Who hoards all years like gold crammed in a
purse,
While doling only baser days to me.
Yet there's an alchemist I know, called Love;
To him I'll straight convey each coin that's
doled;
Each hour he'll take, and stamp both sides thereof
With the true print of his eternal gold!

Harry Kemp

AT THE ZOO

IF you hear old Ego whining
City air is strangling you,
That your job is too confining—
Pay a visit to the Zoo.

Seven paces to the left, seven paces to the right,
Pad the paws that weave a weft eloquent of
cheated might.
Watch the Bengal tiger stare through his narrow
bars of steel;
See the Nubian lion's lair, stuffy lazaret of deal.
What a truly tragic plight, what a fate for roving
heft!
Seven paces to the right, seven paces to the left.

If convinced your life's a bungle,
Cramped as *Punch* and *Judy's* stage,
Think of monarchs of the jungle
Or the desert in a cage!

Richard Butler Glaesner

HINDSIGHT

DID never you notice, in shop or in mart,
When seeking things toothsome, substantial,
or smart—
Or cheap, which is commoner far to us all—
You passed in review every counter and stall
Till, firmly convinced you were right in your
guess,
You purchased that cabbage, umbrella, or dress;
As soon as 'twas bought and your shopping you'd
quit,
You saw something better and cheaper than it?
So wholly depraved are inanimate things,
As one of the classic philosophers sings,

That bargains play hide-and-go-seek from your
eyes
Until you have bought; then they spring a
surprise,
Commingled with taunting, by showing them-
selves
In the visiblest place on the visiblest shelves.
In baffled disgust I have frequently thought:
"Where were you, old-timer, before I had
bought?"

I've seen—so have you—that some marital bliss
Was spoiled ere the smack of the first nuptial
kiss;

When one or the other who'd muttered "I will"
Saw somebody else who had hidden until
Their fates they had sealed past convenient
mending—

A promising honeymoon bitterly ending.
In love, as in trade, one is like to be caught—
To see something better just after he's bought!

Strickland Gillilan

OLD SAFETY

DELIGHT and danger hand in hand
Forever dance with dizzy feet;
Old Safety ever hugs the land,
His only care to sleep and eat.

To little gods that rule the mart
He pays his due and bends his knee;
But gods that bless and break the heart—
He scarcely knows that such gods be.

What though with glory and with awe
Man's little lot be magnified,
He keeps the letter of the law;
His skin is safe, what'er betide.

For him no rainbow of romance,
No leap into the arms of joy,
No dazzling partnership with chance,
No Helen, and no burning Troy.

The hallowed dream, the flaming bliss,
That fill the souls of those who dare,
Though on the edge of the abyss,
To love—and fall they know not where!

Their souls will fling themselves on fire,
Or on the gleaming lances run,
Martyrs of some divine desire
For others sought, for others won.

Yea, not as these is he who hides
And hoards his being, safe and small,
Far from the elemental tides,
And, living so, lives not at all.

Dust unto dust! Such dust as he
Insults the procreative sod
Which, sandy desert though it be,
Somewhere with palms gives thanks to God.

This dust shall never flame nor flower,
Nor answer to the kindly spring,
Nor any resurrecting power
Breathe life into this lifeless thing.

Safe lived he—safe, being dead, he lies,
Forgotten of life forevermore;
One with the dead who do not rise,
The souls God needs not any more!

Gilbert Leigh

UNFRIENDLY RETICENCE

THEY say that money often talks;
If that be true, I cannot see—
Unless she is a frightful snob—
Why she so seldom speaks to me!

Allene Gates

THE MASTERS OF THE SKY

BEFORE these last short years had flown
And made the airy riddle known,
The starry vault was God's alone.

Then came man's keen imaginings,
And from the secrecy of things
He wrung the mystery of wings.

Upon the cloudlands coursed his plane;
He rode the wind's path as a lane,
And claimed the ether his domain.

But when Bellona learned to fly,
And battling squadrons warred on high,
The blue again was No Man's Sky!

McLandburgh Wilson

THE TRUTHFUL SOLDIER

HE sought the most remote of glades,
Then sat upon a stone
And wrote love-notes to twenty maids,
And signed each "Yours alone."

Charles C. Jones

A WILL-O'-WISP

IF I could roam with Constance
Beside the azure sea,
Whose waves would match her eyes of blue,
Ah, would she smile on me?

If I could gaze with Constance
At some clear tropic sky,
Whose sunrise gold is like her hair,
Ah, would she still be shy?

If I could pluck with Constance
Two rosebuds drenched in dew—
Their dainty red just like her lips—
Ah, would she let me woo?

The answer to these questions
I am afraid to seek,
For Constance is elusive
As the dimple in her cheek.

If I could take her in my arms,
She'd sever love's frail net,
And vanish like a will-o'-wisp—
For she's a born coquette!

William Hamilton Hayne

TOO LATE

I NEVER knew you were so fair
Before he married you!
I used to see a smiling face
And tailored gown of blue;

But now I see twin stars beneath
A crown of dusky hair,
And crimson lips that breathe of love—
Ah, beauty everywhere!

I never knew you were so fair
Before he married you,
And now I'm wretched, girl, because
You are so all-fired true!

Grace G. Bostwick

MY DOG

IT must be funny to be a dog,
And never have heard of the war,
And never have bought a Liberty Bond,
And not know what it's for.

Perhaps dogs wonder why most men wear
The same brown clothes this year;
But not to know it's a uniform—
Now mustn't that be queer?

It sort of rests my weary brain
To think that this is so,
And that all that matters to my dog
Is whether I love him or no!

Edward Blanco

THE SUREST SIGN

I SAW the little boys to-day
Come out upon the street to play;
With loud hurrahs they gathered round
A circle chalked upon the ground.
The game they played, the noisy glee,
A happy secret told to me.

The crocus had not told it yet,
Anemone nor violet;
But when the boys with whoop and shout
Brought store of shining marbles out,
I knew that spring had ventured near,
And whispered in each willing ear!

Jeanne Oldfield Potter

Fighting a Food Shortage

THE HARD WORK AND RESOURCEFUL PERSEVERANCE WITH WHICH A COLONY OF FOUR-FOOTED COOPERATORS MET THE PROBLEMS OF AN UNLUCKY WINTER

By Enos A. Mills

Author of "Wild Life in the Rockies," "In Beaver World," etc.

COLD weather came before my new beaver neighbors had laid in their supplies for the winter. They had harvested one stock of food earlier, but this was in their old home several miles downstream. A fierce forest-fire had devastated the region while they were in the midst of their preparations for winter, and had left their home site uninhabitable. The place was abandoned, and the beavers started off in a body to found a new colony.

They traveled up the stream, having the hardships and adventures that ever fall to pioneers. The place they selected for their new home was on a tributary stream not far from my cabin. It was in an old glacier meadow, of which one side had been overgrown by a belt of pines, while the other side was still open. Along the stream and beyond the pines was a ragged and extensive growth of quaking aspen. Upstream the mountain rose steeply, culminating in the summit of Mount Meeker.

Here the beavers built a typical house of sticks, sod, and mud. They were working on a dam across the stream when a trapper came into the region. He broke the dam three or four times. When he finally left, autumn was half gone and preparations for winter in the new beaver colony were only well begun. The dam, which was to make a pond deep enough to prevent the water freezing to the bottom, was unfinished. As yet they had not begun cutting and storing aspen for their winter's food-supply.

These beavers had been industrious; they had planned well; but they had had one misfortune after another, and now a severe cold wave still further handicapped their harvesting operations. The quieter reaches of the stream were frozen over, and a heavy plating of ice was left on the pond. They

would have difficulty transporting their aspen cuttings under such conditions.

Late in October I visited this new wilderness home. At the lower end of the frozen pond was a two-foot hole in the ice. This had been gnawed by the beavers, but for what purpose I could not then determine.

Ordinarily, beavers first cut the nearest and most accessible trees — those on the shore of their pond. Then they go farther up-stream, and finally they will cut trees on near-by slopes. Rarely, if he can help it, does a beaver go fifty feet from the water, although, if necessary, he will go down-stream and float trees against the current, or will drag them up steep slopes.

One crew of loggers had started to work in a near-by grove. They were cutting aspens that were about four inches in diameter and twelve feet high. Before dragging them to the pond, an opening or trailway through the woods had been cleared. Every bush in the way was nibbled off, every obstructing log cut in two and the ends rolled aside.

Dragging the tree-cuttings to the pond was slow, hard work, and it was also dangerous for the foragers to go so far from the water. A beaver is heavy-bodied and short-legged. With his webbed hind feet he is a speedy swimmer, but on land he is a lubber, and moves slowly and with effort.

A few days later the purpose of the hole in the ice of the frozen pond was made plain. A freshly swept trail in the snow led to it out of the woods, and the beavers were taking their green aspen cuttings into the pond by that safer route.

I followed the trail back to where a number of aspens had been cut. Their stumps were about fifteen inches above the snow, and two trees still lay where they

fell. These were about six inches in diameter, and perhaps twenty feet long. Preparatory to being dragged to the pond they had been gnawed into sections of from three to six feet.

The beavers had not nearly finished their harvesting when a heavy fall of snow came, and they were compelled to abandon their dragway from the aspen grove where they had been cutting. They turned their attention to another patch of aspens. It was only sixty feet from the edge of the pond, but was separated from it by a thick belt of pines and a confusion of fallen, fire-killed spruce logs.

A FORMIDABLE ENEMY APPEARS

Deep snow, thick pines, and fallen logs did not stop the persevering harvesters. Tracks in the snow showed that they had been at work beyond the belt of pines. During one night five beavers had wallowed out to the aspens, and had felled and dragged several to the pond; but wolves had pounced upon one of them while he was at work, and, pursuing another on his way to the pond, had overtaken and killed him in the deep snow.

The wolves appeared to realize the distress of the beavers, and lurked about for opportunities to seize the hunger-driven animals. Three days of good weather followed, but the beavers, in fear of their formidable enemies, cut few aspens. Then came another snow-storm, which further hindered the work of harvesting.

Beavers never give up. To get the food they needed so imperatively, my persistent neighbors now decided to dig a tunnel. Beginning on the bottom of the pond, near the shore, they dug outward toward the aspen grove. For fifteen feet their subway ran about two feet under the surface; then it inclined upward, and came out under a pine-tree, close to the aspens. Only in the last few feet of the distance was there difficult digging through frozen ground. Apparently the thick carpet of fallen leaves and the deep snow had checked the frost, and the earth had not frozen deeply.

From the end of their tunnel the beavers cleared a dragway about eighteen inches wide to the aspen grove. In doing this they cut through three or four large logs and tunneled under several others. Then a number of aspens were felled, cut into short sections, dragged to the end of the tunnel, pushed out into the pond beneath

the ice, and finally piled on the bottom of the pond, close to the house.

Solid snow-drifts formed in the grove while this laborious work was going on. A few aspens were cut from the top of a five-foot drift. Next summer the tall stumps suggested that prehistoric beavers, as large as bears, must have reappeared on earth.

At last cold, ice, snow, and the fear of enemies completely stopped the beavers' harvest. The food provided for the colony's winter supply was less than one-half of the normal quantity; but they had done their best, and, come what might, they would meet it patiently, stoically.

The colonists had a hard winter. I visited them a number of times. Now and then snow covered the frozen pond, but usually the wind, sweeping down through the woods along the avenue of the stream, kept the ice clear. One day, looking through the clear ice, I counted six beavers, but on most occasions I was able to see only one or two. The total population of the colony was perhaps twelve or fifteen.

A NEW SOURCE OF SUPPLY

The upper part of the area flooded by their pond had been a partially swampy tract, bearing thick growths of water-loving plants. Finding themselves faced by a food shortage, the beavers burrowed there for roots of sedge, bulbs of lilies, tubers of many plants, and long, juicy roots of willow and alder; but they had only commenced to dig these out when the ever-thickening ice froze over the soil and shut them off. Their early hard luck had prevented them from building the dam as high as it should have been, or the water would have been deeper over this area.

They were not beaten yet, however. They dug a waterway—a canal about two feet wide and nearly as deep—from their house in the center of the pond to the heart of the rooty area. Even after most of the pond was frozen to the bottom, they kept this line of communication open.

Mutual aid is an important factor in beaver life. Without organized cooperation, they could not possibly accomplish the surprising amount of work they do. Their strong love for home, causing them to remain long in one place, their astonishing skill, and their untiring industry, enable them to achieve truly remarkable results.

The members of this colony had toiled unceasingly since the late summer. I do

not know how many days' work they put into their big ditch. I do not know how they handled the problem of a shortage of food, or whether they went on short rations. But it is safe to say that no beaver had more than his portion, for they are firm believers in the principle of cooperation.

I had glimpses of their operations through the clear spots in the ice. They tore the root-filled section to pieces, and devoured all that it contained; but not until the following summer, when the dam was broken and the water ran out of the pool, did I realize how deeply the bottom of the pond had been plowed. I have seen gardens uprooted by hogs, and mountain meadows dug to pieces by grizzly bears, but none of them equaled this.

The supply of roots finally ran out, and the bark of the green aspens was eaten off, and still this mountain region was white with winter and the pond locked and sealed with ice. Beavers are strict vegetarians. There were trout in the pond, but these were not caught; nor were bodies of the starved beavers eaten, as sometimes occurs among other animals.

HOW THE BEAVERS ESCAPED

At last the beavers found that they must either escape from the pond, which had become a foodless prison, or perish. An examination which I made in the spring indicated that they first tried to escape through the long tunnel which they drove toward the aspens, but this had apparently been closed by the ice. They had then excavated several feet of a new tunnel, but evidently found that they could not drive it through the hard earth. Beavers are wonderful engineers—the handling of earth in building dams or in the making of canals is as much in their line as tree-felling—but cutting and tunneling through frozen, gravelly soil is too difficult for them.

They next attempted to cut a hole upward through the two feet of ice, as I found out later when the ice was breaking up; and they almost succeeded. On the edge of their house they had raised a working foundation of mud and sticks, and had gnawed upward to within three or four inches of the surface. Beavers are expert gnawers, and have been known to cut through trees more than two feet in diameter with their powerful teeth and jaws. Perhaps they might have succeeded eventually, but apparently they found another and better way out of the pond.

What they did was to tunnel out through the unfrozen earth beneath the bottom of the dam. They commenced on the bottom of the pond, and drove a fifteen-inch tunnel nearly level through the base of the dam, a foot or two beneath the water, and below the frost-line, coming out in the ice-covered channel of the stream.

As this tunnel had to be dug under water, it must have been slow work, and the excavators must have relieved one another at frequent intervals. When a working beaver had to breathe, he had to swim to the house and climb up to the floor, above water-level, in order to obtain air.

Tracks of six muddy-footed fellows on the snow at the outer end of the completed tunnel told the number who survived that cruel winter. Spring came, and warmth and flood water broke up the ice on the pond about a month after they escaped. No young beavers were seen.

The surviving beavers lived in holes along the bank of the stream until summer; then they wandered away. Late that August, however, they—or possibly six other beavers—came back to the place. They completed the unfinished dam and repaired the abandoned house, and by mid-October they had a huge pile of food stored in the pond for the coming winter.

NOT A DREAM

LOVE, that was I who stole last night
Down through the wind and rain,
And laid my hand, so thin and white,
Upon your eyes again.

Those were my lips that came between
Your tears and softly spoke;
And yet you said: "It was a dream!"
Dear love, when you awoke.

Wilson Nixon

A One-Man Concern

BY A. LINCOLN BENDER

Illustrated by George Brehm

IT took J. Wesley Crowder ten years to attain his eminence in the heavy-hardware line. From the day when, as a green high-school graduate, he applied bravely for a position, until ten years later, when he came to direct the destinies of J. Wesley Crowder & Co., he had studied, struggled, and succeeded.

J. Wesley was not handsome. He was thin, and inclined to show too many wrinkles. Also, he appeared to be always on the jump, like some rabbit momentarily expecting the wind to shift and bring with it news that a hound was coming.

J. Wesley wore his suits until they became shiny. Style as portrayed by million-dollar tailoring concerns tempted him not a bit. He dressed soberly, quietly, and with a great regard for comfort. His hair was thin, his ears stuck out just a bit, and his nose was not a mark of beauty.

But he was a success. Bradstreet's said so—credit double A. His acquaintances said so with resounding praise. His competitors said so while wiggling uncomfortably in their offices, as they waited for J. Wesley to make new and unexpected moves. Lastly, his employees said so. They knew it, because J. Wesley told them so himself.

In the words of Bill Moore, the bookkeeper, J. Wesley Crowder & Co. was a "one-man concern." His business was J. Wesley's love, his shrine, his mother and father and poor relations all rolled into one. Through its various stages he was happy, worried, smiling, harried in turn. He fondled it, doctored it, nursed it, and knew every trick and turn in all its departments as he knew his own two rooms in his quiet hotel.

He was president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary all in one, and sales-manager and advertising-manager besides. He was a veritable spider, all eyes, who spun his web himself and sat in the center

of it, watching his manikins jump for him as he pulled the strings. It was fascinating, this being king of a domain; it was life worth living.

Then, after ten continuous years without a day off, J. Wesley suddenly felt himself tire. At first, he did not realize that he was cracking under the strain. He thought that a rest of a week or two would put him back on his feet, fresh and eager to strive after new laurels. But he could not take the time off. If he went away, the web would sag at the ends! He was needed in the business; the wheels needed his driving-power behind them. He was the hubs of the wheels, without which the wagon was useless.

Every morning for a week he had crawled into his office, his eyes heavy from an insomnia-laden night, his nerves jangled. There was not much relief after he got there. He was irritable. The steady stream of his subordinates, who conferred with him constantly, put him on the ragged edge. For it was part of J. Wesley's rigid system that everything, from the purchase of a lead-pencil to the signing of a contract, should come before him for his O. K.

J. Wesley had never married. He had not had time. Many times he had said as much to his business associates at the Hardware Club. Not that he disliked the ladies—not he! That was shown by his large office force, composed almost exclusively of them. Filing department, contract, foreign, inquiries—each was patrolled by women. Only the nominal heads were men, and they but mere puppets—monitors of the class-room rather than thinking cogs of his business machinery.

His private secretary was a woman. She, too, though clever and quick, was but a person who carried out his orders, and never broached the word "initiative."

On the third day of his weariness, J.

Wesley sighed as he threw up the cover of his roll-top desk. He felt decidedly off color. He could not eat, he could not sleep, his nerves jumped. Until ten o'clock he issued his orders to the department heads in order, and they had tired him worse than ever.

At that moment Miss Houghton brought in his mail. J. Wesley was proud of Helen Houghton—not of her appearance, not of her attractiveness, but of her business qualifications. He often made boast of the fact that he had schooled her himself. She answered most of his mail with but a word from him, thus saving him much time that would otherwise have been taken up in dictating.

This morning Miss Houghton hovered a bit as they finished their tasks. Her cheeks had taken on a becoming blush, causing J. Wesley to look twice at her. He had never thought of her in a personal, friendly manner. She had never appealed to his sense of beauty; but this morning she was certainly attractive. He noted this phenomenon for the first time in their eight years' acquaintance.

"Well?" he asked as she stood before him.

"Mr. Crowder," she said, "I think it is only fair to inform you that I am going to resign, to take effect from the first of the month."

J. Wesley dropped the letter that he had been perusing, and raised his brows in surprise.

"What?"

Miss Houghton had been with him so long that the mere thought of her departure caused a chill to pass up and down J. Wesley's back.

"Yes. I have thought it over, and I am going to leave. Of course you will give me a letter of reference, should I need it?"

"But," spluttered J. Wesley, rising and fixing his eyes on her—"but, Miss Houghton, I—this won't do!"

He caught himself in the middle of his utterance. What was he blurting out? He, J. Wesley Crowder, acknowledging to one of his employees that he possibly could not run the concern without her assistance? He snapped his jaws and bowed.

"I thank you, Miss Houghton," said he. "You certainly have worked faithfully, and I shall do everything I can for you. You know what is best. If you will place yourself in readiness, I shall make an imme-

diately move to secure another girl for you to break in."

His head was bent over a letter, and he did not look up when she passed out of the room.

"Confound it!" he muttered. "Just as I was becoming accustomed to her work, she leaves. Oh, well, that's always the way! Lucky I have my fingers on every pulse of the work, or I would find myself in a fine stew many times."

II

As the morning lengthened, the more J. Wesley thought of his private secretary's announcement, the more morose he grew. He needed her—of that there was no doubt. She was valuable to him; far too valuable to lose. He would offer her an increase in salary.

Then his pride revolted. He did *not* need her. Why should he think so? He needed no one of his employees. He knew every detail of his business.

But after a lunch that tasted like straw, he returned, his thoughts chaotic. Twice he found himself watching Miss Houghton's features as she came in to consult him about a letter.

Late in the afternoon he broke out suddenly:

"Miss Houghton, I can't conceive why you are leaving me. We have worked so long together that I have come to depend on you. Are you dissatisfied?"

Instantly he was sorry that he had spoken. He wished that he could recall the words.

She did not seem to take the question as directly personal. Rather, her clear gray eyes bored to his, and her lips were firm as she replied:

"Partly. I said I was going to resign, Mr. Crowder. This is why—I am tired of being a nonentity here. You ask if I am dissatisfied, and I say I am, emphatically. I have been here with you for eight years, and I know as much about the business as you do, and what am I? An automaton! I don't like it. I am going to leave. There is no incentive here. I—please don't take offense, Mr. Crowder—I am tired of working for an egotist, for a one-man concern!"

J. Wesley Crowder gazed open-mouthed at his private secretary. Her cheeks were tinged a deep red, and once again he noted subconsciously that she was distinctively attractive.

Her words burned. He felt them as if each had been a lash. It was a cruel blow to his pride, his ambition, his success. It was a challenge!

He felt his blood grow hot, and it was on the tip of his tongue to blurt out:

"You may leave this minute, Miss Houghton, if the place is so distasteful!"

But she had subsided, and her pencil hovered over the book tentatively. He tapped the floor with his toe, and once again plunged into his work, finishing in a mad hurry.

As she went quietly to her room, he gave vent to his thoughts.

"Egotist! One-man concern! Huh! Why not? I know everything that goes on! There are no leaks in this firm! There—"

A tinge of pain shot to his back, and he bit his lip.

He had been arraigned in his own office, and by a mere employee! His cheeks burned. Miss Helen Houghton, his aid for eight years, had called him an egotist! With an exclamation he seized his hat, crammed it on, and stalked out.

The office force looked up in surprise as his tall, lean figure passed toward the elevator. Then, apprehensive that perhaps they had overstayed their time, they shot hasty glances at the clock. But it was J. Wesley Crowder who was making the error. Four thirty, and he was going home!

III

No one doubted J. Wesley's methods of obtaining business. He went after his men, and landed them almost invariably. There was nothing underhanded about his methods. He played the game on its merits; only J. Wesley seemed to be able to smell out his victims and catch them before his rivals knew that the markets were open.

There was one dissipation that J. Wesley Crowder allowed himself. That was his membership in the Hardware Club. Here he ate every noon. Here he gathered pointers that he either elaborated or discarded. Here it was that almost every day he talked over the hardware situation with two or three of his strongest competitors.

John Donaldson, sturdy and full-limbed, with a smooth, well-shaven face and shrewd eyes, was J. Wesley's open enemy. He was full of the vim of the younger generation, and a hustler. Behind J. Wesley's back Donaldson was wont to say:

"Piker! He don't let another person



HE SEIZED HIS HAT,
CRAMMED IT ON, AND
STALKED OUT

share in his success. Never saw a man like him. He's the boss—and wants everybody to know it. His employees never get a chance. Piker!"

Which was putting in other words what Miss Helen Houghton had said.

"But," John Donaldson would go on, "I'll get him yet—see if I don't!"

Thus it lay, when Miss Houghton told J. Wesley Crowder why she was resigning.

Overnight he thought it over. Mentally he visualized her every duty. He recalled with a deep sigh that she had saved him many a valuable moment. She was reliable, punctual, willing, tireless, one might almost say brilliant.

Then, as he pictured her trim figure, he turned his mind back to the afternoon.

"Tired of working for an egotist! Knows as much as I do!"

That had been the most trying part of her statement. It was not complimentary in the least, but she had not said it with vindictive intent; it was rather the sorrowful remark of a person who is telling a friend of a fault. Her intonation had hurt J. Wesley. Even after he fell asleep he could somehow hear her voice in his ear.

The next morning he plunged directly into his work, as if nothing had happened. Not once did he glance up as Miss Houghton passed about, handing him his mail or bringing him some paper that he wanted. By manner and gesture he made her feel that he had forgotten her very existence; but he was watching her intently. Twice, as he looked up suddenly, he caught her stealing furtive glances at him, and he wondered vaguely what they meant.

At noon he left, saying:

"I will return at three, Miss Houghton. I am going over to the Carbine Company to land that bolt contract."

There was a smile on her lips as she responded:

"I hope you succeed, Mr. Crowder!"

He bowed and pulled the door to. Always she had said just that. Always, when he announced that he was going out for business, she had sped him on with a good word and a smile.

At the lunch-table, John Donaldson glanced up and queried:

"Going over to the Carbine Company?"

J. Wesley Crowder frowned. Donaldson was becoming a bit too familiar of late.

"Yes," he replied shortly, and ordered his lunch.

He left immediately after paying his bill. At three, to the minute, he was back at the office. As he hung his hat on the clothes-tree, Miss Houghton approached. There was a question in her eyes, and her lips were parted.

"Did you land them?"

J. Wesley Crowder sat down before he replied.

"Bring your book," he ordered. "No, I lost them. They said I was too high. Too high! My gracious, Miss Houghton, I went over my figures seven times! I know no one could beat them!"

She smiled in a consoling manner, and seated herself to await his dictation. He had picked up his column of figures and was glancing over them. Then, with a shake of his head, he tossed them to one side and started on his mail.

When he had finished, Miss Houghton reached over and secured the estimate sheet. Rapidly she glanced at the figures. Then, quietly:

"You have the screws down at sixty cents a dozen, Mr. Crowder. They should be six cents."

Without a word he seized the paper and studied it. Then he grew red.

"You are right," he said slowly.

J. Wesley Crowder pored over the list of figures. One item stood out as if written in fire. He had erred on one of the most important jobs in the city. It meant ten thousand dollars' worth of business to J. Wesley Crowder & Co., and he had lost it by the mere misplacing of a cipher.

Seven times he had gone over his estimate, and each time that cipher had eluded his sight. He cursed himself for a fool.

If only he had discovered the error himself! Miss Houghton had been the one to locate it. No wonder she had said that she knew as much about the business as he did! J. Wesley Crowder, smartest heavy-hardware man in the city, had overestimated on a large contract on account of a misplaced cipher. Suppose it got out! He would be a standing joke for months. And would it not get out? Miss Houghton was going to leave in two weeks!

J. Wesley snarled at himself, and called himself all the darned fools in six counties; but the damage had been done. He must swallow it and digest it as best he could.

When Miss Houghton came in to hand him his evening mail he was in a red rage. It was gall and wormwood to be under her



THERE WAS A QUESTION IN HER EYES, AND HER LIPS WERE PARTED. "DID YOU LAND THEM?"

gaze. His brows met in a straight line. It seemed only meet and proper that he should cull over her work and discover any little errors. She had found one of his—he must find one of hers!

But as she stood there his rage seemed to dissolve miraculously. Somehow he found himself rested by the very sight of her. He handed back the letters and smiled faintly.

"Send them out, Miss Houghton," he said, brushing his hand across his forehead. "I'm dog-tired to-day. That mistake took all the starch out of me!"

Her gaze was solicitous.

"You need a rest, Mr. Crowder. You are worn out."

He felt himself agree with her statement. He *was* tired! The numberless details that he absorbed in the day's work were beginning to weary him.

"Good night, Mr. Crowder," said Miss Houghton. "Better luck next time!"

J. Wesley caught his breath. How comforting her voice sounded; how restful her very figure looked! Even to her shoes she was neat and wholesome. And she was going to leave him!

"Good night, Miss Houghton," he said.

He roundly condemned himself for letting her go. "Bonehead! Unadulterated ass!" was his muttered opinion of himself.

IV

THE week that was to be Helen Houghton's last passed too quickly for J. Wesley Crowder. Another young lady had been employed, but she was dreadfully slow in grasping details. Miss Houghton was patient, and her advice served to reduce the tension somewhat. J. Wesley marveled at the wealth of material she had stored in her head. He noted with amazement how confidently she handled work that he himself had found difficult. Twice he was on the point of asking her to stay, but his pride held him back. That sentence, "tired of working for an egotist," smote him every time he thought of the subject. It was a particularly sore spot.

The day before she left, John Donaldson added insult to injury. He twitted J. Wesley on the Carbine Company contract.

"Got it over on you that time!" he exultantly cried. "Pulled a spoke out of your wheel then, old boy!"



WITH A SYMPATHETIC CRY SHE FLEW TO THE COOLER AND RETURNED WITH
A GLASS OF WATER

Every word was like the slap of an open hand; but J. Wesley had to accept it with as good grace as he could muster.

"Guess you'll be glad to know that I've put over another knock-out, Crowder!" Donaldson went on.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, don't you know?" asked Donaldson innocently. "Miss Houghton has signed up with me. She starts as my sales-manager next Monday!"

J. Wesley swallowed his coffee and ran back to his office. Miss Houghton had been hired by Donaldson! She had gone over to J. Wesley's strongest competitor! She was going to be Donaldson's sales-manager!

J. Wesley Crowder gazed off over the noisy street. Women had ever been an insoluble problem to him. The mere fact that he hired them was one of his idiosyncrasies. When they approached him, he could not refuse them. To his mind they were peculiar, incomprehensible, mysterious. Often he had seen them—and been driven to a near-panic at the sight—burst into tears for no apparent reason. They were not, in his meager estimation, faithful or steady. Their codes of honor were low. Witness this act of wanton selfishness on the part of Helen Houghton.

He had done everything a gentleman should toward her. Never by word or sign had he intimated that their relations were other than strictly businesslike. And now Helen was going to aid his strongest competitor!

He could see Donaldson's smiling face. It angered him beyond words. Taking his right-hand assistant from under his very eyes—stealing her! That's what it amounted to—stealing!

J. Wesley Crowder's fingers had formed themselves into fists. He rapped hard on the desk. Two body-blows from the same man in less than a week! Little lights pulsed before his eyes; his breath became quickened to painful gasps. How his head ached! How his back pained!

"Thief!" he growled hoarsely, rising and pounding the desk.

The excitement was too great, and he flopped back into his chair.

Whether or not it had been the repeated knocking that brought Miss Houghton into the room he knew not. At any rate, she appeared, gazed at him, and then, with a sympathetic cry, was at his side.

"Mr. Crowder—John—you are ill!"

She flew to the cooler and returned with a glass of water.

"Drink it!" she commanded.

He looked at her, astonished at the sympathy in her eyes and the gentle intonation in her voice, as he swallowed the liquid. Her fingers were laving his wrists.

"I'm all right now," said he, after gulping the last drop of water. "I'm tired—that's all!"

She nodded in acquiescence and smiled down at him.

Slowly her first words came back to him. She had called him by his first name—a name that he had not heard for years! It seemed as if he were struggling with some intangible problem. Her fingers lingered; he felt an electric shock course through his veins. He seized her hand. It was so small and soft and velvety!

"Miss Houghton!" J. Wesley Crowder thrilled. She drew back a step, startled at the note in his voice. "Helen!"

Then he stopped, surprised at his temerity. But she did not move from him. The girl's gray eyes were like two stars, and her lips were parted.

"Helen!" he stammered, lost in the new feeling. "Now I know what it was I lacked! It was love. You were here beside me for eight years, and I didn't realize that I loved you. Helen, Donaldson told me—that you had signed with him. I can't believe it. Is it true?"

Helen Houghton turned her head.

He was at her side, his hand resting bashfully on her shoulder.

"I—you can't go—now, Helen. This is too wonderful! Now that you know where your love is, why, your heart wouldn't be in your work!" His voice was exultant. "Why, Helen, your heart is here! You know it—I want you!"

He choked a bit, and his eyes looked at her wildly. She did not reply. The silence frightened him.

"Forgive me," he went on in a wild endeavor to explain himself. "You—Helen, you were right. I was an egotist! I never knew—I never realized it. Oh, how blind I was! But now I see. And"—he waved his arms in wide semicircles and walked toward his desk—"from now on J. Wesley Crowder & Co. is not a one-man concern any more. It is a partnership, and"—he had come close, and his hands once more rested on the shapely shoulders—"and you are the partner, Helen!"

The Wolf of Kahlotus*

A ROMANCE OF THE NORTHWEST

By Maryland Allen

Illustrated by W. B. King

SQUARE BILL TOLLIVER of Kahlotus, a rich landowner in the big timber country of Oregon, has been killed, and his daughter Ettarre, or Torry, appeals to Clinton McKean, the Federal district attorney in Portland, for help in investigating his death. It appears that she found her father's body in the woods, with his throat lacerated as if by some wild animal, and in his hand a torn scrap of dark-green cloth with a coronet worked in gold thread.

There is a local tradition of a great wolf—the Wolf of Kahlotus—whose murderous attacks on white men avenged the wrongs of an old-time Indian chief. There have been rumors that this terrible animal, or some counterpart of it, has reappeared in the big timber, but Torry and McKean cannot explain Tolliver's death so. They feel that some other enemy has been concerned in it; and their belief is strengthened when the girl, in Portland, receives a letter warning her not to return to Kahlotus. It is further confirmed when Torry makes a duplicate of the scrap of green cloth—leaving the original with McKean—and it is stolen from her room at a hotel; again when, on the way to Kahlotus, she and McKean narrowly escape being crushed by a rock that crashes down from a cliff beside the road; and still again when, on reaching Big Cabin, Torry's home, they find the stolen bit of cloth fastened on the gate-post, as if in derision of them.

Big Cabin is a lonely house, Torry's mother being dead and her two brothers in France. She has no other relatives except cousins of her father—Dr. Hundberg, a German professor in Boston, and his nephew, a captain in the German army. There are portraits of these two in the hall at Big Cabin. Torry's chief companion is the housekeeper, Mrs. Barry, whose husband, Black Jack Barry, is foreman of the Tolliver wheat-ranch, and whose son, Dan Barry, is in South America.

There are few neighbors in that wild country. McKean has an unfriendly encounter with one of them—Joe Cotswold, known as the Timber Beast, a rough-spoken fellow who sullenly defies the district attorney; but Torry acquits the man of any connection with her father's death. McKean is depressed by the difficulty of the inquiry—all the more because he had just previously scored a failure with one James Tussy, whom he strongly suspected of being a German agent, but against whom he could find no evidence. Nevertheless, instead of putting some of his men on the Kahlotus case, he resolves to make further investigations in person.

VIII

THE district attorney's thoughts were scattered by the sound of a horse on the trail behind him, and by a voice that called him by name. He turned, hardly knowing what to expect, and saw the Timber Beast mounted upon a small, wiry pinto pony, which looked fresh in spite of the pace at which it was traveling. Evidently the man had not come far.

"I know you're McKean, the Federal attorney," he said composedly, riding up alongside. "What are you here for?"

"Perhaps I'm on a still hunt for slackers," said McKean. "If you know my name, I don't know yours."

"My name is Cotswold, and I am a year

over draft age. Ha!" he exclaimed bitterly. "That doesn't mean anything to you, but you may have heard of the Timber Beast."

"No," returned McKean. "I never heard of any fancy animals in these parts but that Indian wolf you were talking about yesterday afternoon."

Cotswold stared suspiciously, and as if a little nonplused.

"But I'll tell you what I think," went on McKean. "I think that of all the dirty, damnable, infernal, vile crimes in the calendar, to deprive Miss Tolliver and this country of her father is the worst!"

"She hated him," shot back the other hotly. "And besides," he added more calmly, "he misused his power."

*This story began in the February number of MURSEY'S MAGAZINE

"She hated him?" repeated McKean with a rising inflection. "Now I could swear she never told you that!"

"Well," parried Cotswold, "if she didn't, I have it on very good authority."

"No."

"Young Barry?"

Again Cotswold glared suspiciously, his upper lip slightly raised, showing his sharp, white teeth.



McKEAN STOOD WATCHING HER. HE WANTED TO HELP HER. HE WAS IN LOVE WITH HER!

"For instance?"

"None of your business!"

"Mr. Tolliver, himself, perhaps?"

"No."

"Mrs. Barry?"

"No."

"Her husband?"

"How do you know there is a young Barry?"

"His mother told me."

"Yes, and I suppose she told you where he was, too!"

"Correct! You're a good guesser. She did. She said he was in South America."

A glimmer of derisive mirth flickered in the Timber Beast's eyes and was gone.

"Yes," he replied; "and don't you be afraid he'll not be wise enough to stay there!"

"Nothing will keep him there if he's a good American," said McKean seriously. "If he's not, he'd better stay there—we don't want him here or in France!"

Cotswold gave a short, hard laugh that held no mirth.

"You're a regular stump orator," he sneered.

They had come to a point where a narrow, rough trail struck off from the one to Skedee and wound away through the trees. A tall snag with a graceful little hemlock growing from the top served as a landmark for the entrance to this branching trail. Looking sharply through the trees, McKean could see the white light that denoted a clearing near at hand.

"Some one live there?" he said carelessly.

"That's my place," said Cotswold.

"Oh, Peace Cabin! Is it far from the logging-camp?"

"As far as I could get," replied the other grimly. "That's my place, and when I can't live there I'll die. I'll never move my hand for another rotten capitalist as long as I live!"

"You were hook-tender at Tolliver's Camp Three, weren't you?"

"Well, what of it? Barry told you that, I suppose."

"No—Miss Tolliver."

Cotswold's face hardened, and his eyes glittered.

"She told it to show you what a poor devil I was!"

"On the contrary. She told me you were a very fine fellow until you lost your balance with the I. W. W. She told me her father thought so, too."

"She—he—" Cotswold stammered, and then rode in silence, his fingers aimlessly picking at his horse's mane.

"You've good landmarks in here," said McKean, studying him intently, while trying to keep up a great show of indifference. "I don't believe any one could get lost."

Cotswold seemed to recover, and raked the district attorney with a fierce glare of suspicion.

"There's no other place in the world easier," he said. "You go a hundred paces from this trail without a compass, and you

couldn't get out unless I heard you and chose to answer!"

"Which you would not," said McKean cheerfully.

The other grinned.

"You can't fool me in the big timber," he said; "but I know many that you can."

Oddly enough, McKean felt that Cotswold was thinking of just one man.

"I think I'll try to pay you a visit some day," he said lightly, "right through the timber."

"You'll not!" Cotswold cried. "Do you think I want to be arrested because you're a darned fool? If you come to my place, you'll come by the trail!"

"So that you and your friends can see me coming," retorted McKean. "Good Heavens, what's that?"

A long, low howl, penetrating and indescribably terrifying, swept out through the trees. It filled the air and found a moaning echo deep in the brooding stillness of the big timber. It rose to a high, wailing cry, sank back again to the sustained low note, and died slowly away. It was the cry of the Wolf of Kahlotus, the howl that McKean had heard the night before, that had welcomed him on his way to Big Cabin with Torry.

Cotswold looked at him strangely.

"You can't tell everything about the big timber in a day," said he.

"Yes," rejoined McKean; "but just what do you call that?"

"Well, about here they say it's old Kahlotus's wolf, and it's a sign that some one's still to go."

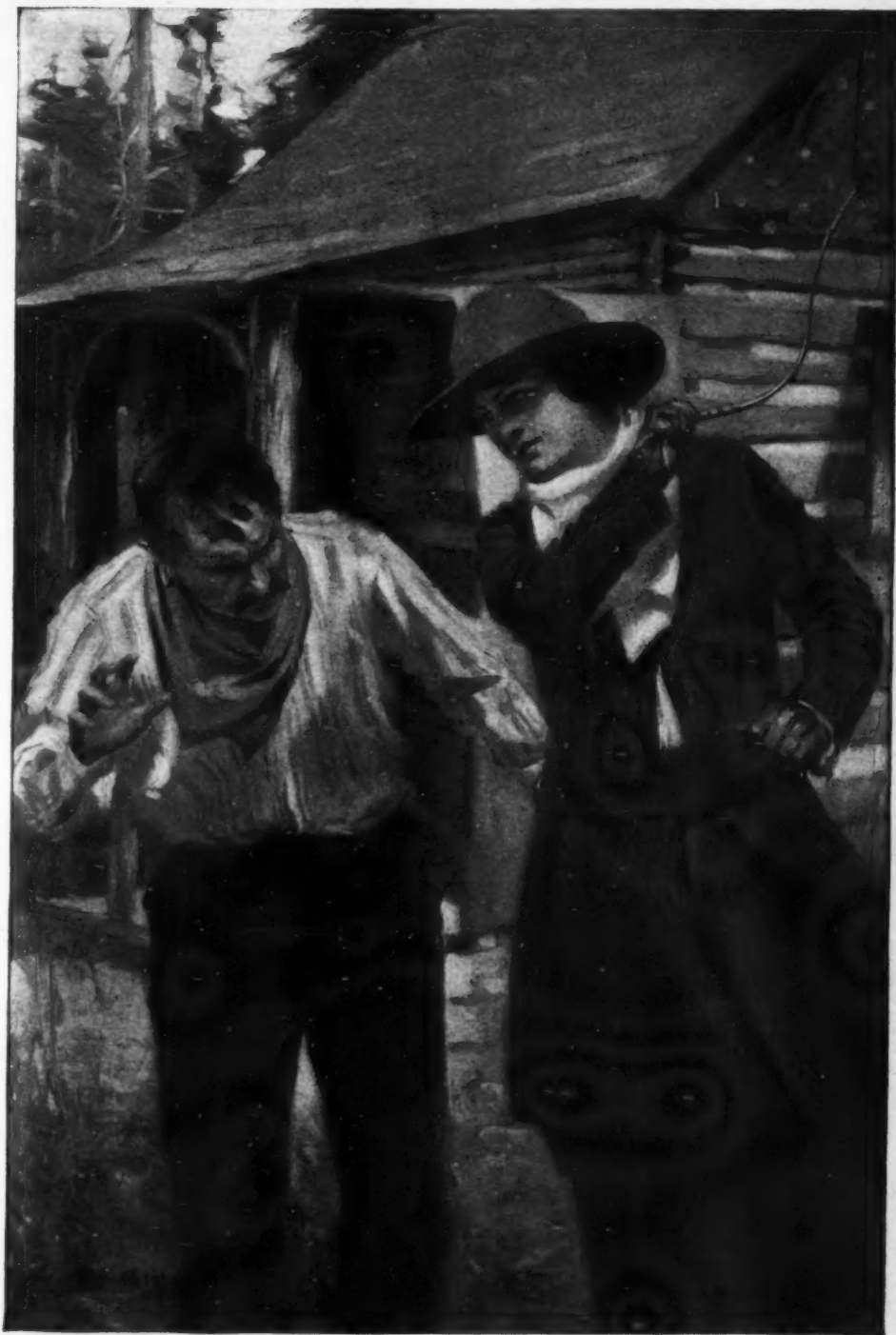
"Look here!" exclaimed McKean abruptly. "You're too smart a man to be caught with such stuff. Just what is it makes that noise?"

"If you were as smart a man as you think you are," returned the other mockingly, "you would not have to ask me that question. I'm going home."

He spurred his horse. It leaped into the rough trail by the snag and darted away through the trees.

McKean sat and stared after him with a mixture of amusement and perplexity. He could only be sure of two things. The man was openly hostile, and the wolf cry had come each time from the same general direction.

No need to ride on to Skedee. There seemed nothing to do but return to Big Cabin and add to his collection of loose



TORRY ADVANCED A STEP AND RAISED HER QUIRT. "SEE HERE, VICENTE!"

ends. He turned and cantered slowly back up the trail.

There came a flutter in the huckleberry brush to the right, and his horse shied violently. A woman with a shawl held closely over her head stepped out into the trail, and held up one hand in a gesture of command. Before McKean could halt, she spoke.

"Go back!" she said imploringly. "Go back to Big Cabin and take her away!"

McKean stared in stupid surprise.

"Just why should I take her away?" he demanded.

"I cannot tell you." Her words were clear-cut and careful, as if English was a little strange to her. Her face, framed in the dark shawl, looked startlingly fair and sad. "But for God's sake do as I say! She cannot stop things now, but there is no reason why her life should be taken, too."

"You mean the Wolf of Kahlotus?" persisted McKean.

"I mean a greater and more powerful wolf than you can cope with!" the woman cried with sudden spirit. "Do as I bid you. You are none of you very clever, but perhaps you can save her when I tell you. Go now, quickly!"

She turned and darted into the green brush, which shook with her passing and was still.

McKean, his soul full of vague fears, his thoughts plagued with surmise, rode hard on the trail to Big Cabin.

IX

TORRY was at the fireplace on the veranda with her chin in her hand and her eyes fixed broodingly on the fire. She did not get up as McKean approached. He thought, as he looked at her, how much of the spirit of the country had gone into the making of the girl—its serenity, quiet strength, and grave charm. The little life of the cities had broken against her and failed to find a chink in the armor of abounding health and strength in which she had been clad by the big timber.

Some one else was searching for that chink now. She had borne the first onslaught bravely, convinced, womanlike, without proof, that the attack was upon her country, not herself. How much more could she stand, though, and how far was he justified in following the trail his instinct declared was the right one?

He sat down beside her and held his hands toward the flames.

"You say you have perfect confidence in Mrs. Barry, Miss Tolliver?"

She turned her eyes on him without moving.

"You asked me that a little while ago. Yes."

"I have not," he replied. "Tell me about that road we came over yesterday," he went on, before she could speak. "When it cuts through the timber, it surely swings in somewhere on the other side of our friend Cotswold's Peace Cabin?"

"It does," she said.

"We've located the range of the wolf."

"Located the range of the wolf?"

"I've been here practically two days and a night," he replied, "and I've heard that brute howl four times—I heard it to-day, while I was riding up toward Skedee—and always from the same direction. It was down in there it got your father, too."

"I know," she interrupted gently. "But when you come to think that the wolf has been called because of us—why, it's natural it should be in the timber nearest the house."

"It is natural," he admitted. "No, I did not go all the way to Skedee. Tell me, Miss Tolliver, did you ever quarrel with your father?"

"Only once." She looked at him with childish honesty. "I wanted to marry Chan before he went abroad, and my father opposed it violently. I wish I had not given in to him! If it was my husband that is in France, and not my betrothed, I would not feel quite so much alone."

Her voice trembled slightly. She bit her lip, and covered her mouth with her fingers, as if to hide its weakness. There was silence for a space; then McKean said:

"I don't know but what you would be safer away from here."

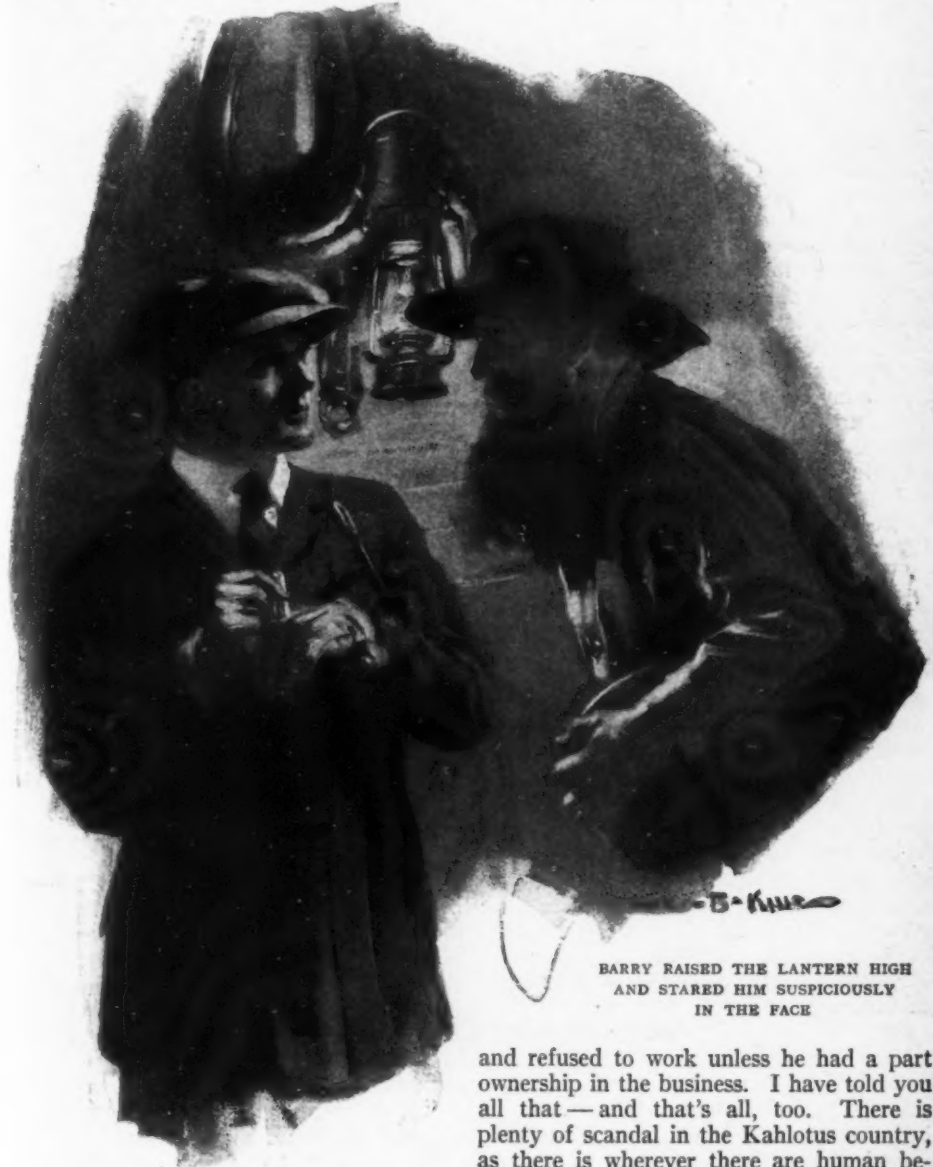
"You mean you want to go back to town!" she exclaimed quickly.

"Indeed, you are mistaken," he replied earnestly. "There is more in this thing than appears to the eye. You knew that before; I know it now. No, no, I propose to stick to you closer than a brother until it is all over," he added with a laugh which he vainly endeavored to keep unconscious.

He was telling himself that he was a fool—that he had never laid his eyes on this girl until the day before, and that she was promised to a man fighting for his country.

"But you must help me," he went on. "Now, to begin with, who is that fair-haired woman who is staying at the Timber Beast's place?"

with some heat. "No one ever stays long at Peace Cabin. Men come there hunting and fishing, and Joe Cotswold has been acting as a guide since he became a syndicalist



BARRY RAISED THE LANTERN HIGH
AND STARED HIM SUSPICIOUSLY
IN THE FACE

"I never saw any woman there, fair-haired or black-haired."

"You never saw—" It was McKean's turn to be surprised and slightly resentful. "See here, Miss Tolliver—"

"I tell you I never did," she interrupted

and refused to work unless he had a part ownership in the business. I have told you all that—and that's all, too. There is plenty of scandal in the Kahlotus country, as there is wherever there are human beings, but I never heard of a woman at Peace Cabin."

"Well, I have," said McKean doggedly. He told of the woman who had accosted him on the trail. "She was not an American," he concluded. "Her English was like a foreigner's."

Torry arose.

"Mr. McKean," she said, "let us start right now and ride all the way to Skedee."

"To Skedee?"

"Yes. We can get back by dark."

"But why to Skedee?"

"Well, the trouble all came on my father's return from Skedee, and—well, I'm sick of all these odds and ends. I want something definite. I went into my father's clothes-closet an hour ago. A riding-suit of his is missing."

"Since when?"

"Well, I know it was there two days before—before he was killed."

"He might have taken it away himself."

"Yes, but only to Skedee, and I am going there to find out. Oh!" she cried in a sudden passionate outburst, "if I don't find out something definite—something I can put my teeth in—I'll go crazy!"

She turned away, biting her lips, clenching and unclenching her hands, fighting hard for self-control. McKean stood watching her. He wanted to help her. He was in love with her!

Suddenly she turned calm again.

"Want to ride to Skedee?"

"You bet I do!" was his hearty reply.

In a quarter of an hour they rode away from Big Cabin, and traveled hard and fast for Skedee. The Basque sheep-herder unlocked Square Bill's room there, and Torry crossed quickly to the closet and threw open the door. It was empty.

"My father told me all his things were at Big Cabin," she said, looking back over her shoulder.

The Basque stood at the door of the shack, eying McKean queerly.

"Has any one been here since my father's death, Vicente?" Torry demanded.

The Basque shook his head and grinned. No, no, all the excitement was over at Skedee before that.

Torry stared into the empty closet and sighed bitterly. Then she slammed the door and came out of the room.

"Let's go!" she said to McKean.

The Basque followed them out to the horses.

"Misse, missee!" He touched Torry's arm and beckoned her away. "He—he—" he indicated McKean covertly with his thumb—"he not keel me?"

"No! What in the world ever put that idea into your head?"

"Joe, he say it."

"Joe who?"

"Timber Beas'."

"You told me no one had been here!"

"No, no, I meet 'im on de trail wit' dat odder."

"What other?"

The Basque regarded her with an indescribable mixture of fear and cunning in his stupid, good-natured face.

"You know, you know, missee!"

He backed away.

"See here, Vicente!" Torry advanced a step and raised her quirt. Then she halted, laughed helplessly, and dropped her hand. "Oh, what's the use? Yes, Vicente, I know, I know."

She turned to her horse, seized the reins, stuck her toe into the stirrup, and swung into the saddle as the brute darted away.

"More loose ends!" she exclaimed, when McKean rode up beside her. "Well, we shall be late getting home."

"What man can he mean?"

McKean kept beside her, thinking aloud.

"That's for us to find out, I suppose," sighed Torry. "You don't know these people in the big timber, but I do. Still, it's more or less safe to say that it's the man who tried to get back the piece of cloth and followed us here from Portland."

"The man who warned you, I wonder?"

"How do you know it was a man that warned me?" she cried.

"I've taken a leaf out of your own book," replied McKean boldly. "I have a hunch; and my hunch is that it was the Timber Beast."

"The Timber Beast? Why the Timber Beast?"

"Because he loves you," said McKean bluntly.

Their eyes met in a flash that seemed to blind them both; and McKean knew that the girl was at all self-conscious she knew he loved her, too. Her throat and face flushed crimson, and she stared straight ahead.

"He wouldn't dare!" she said, very low.

"Why, you told me that much yourself," returned McKean.

"Yes, but that was when my father was alive."

"Oh, come now!" McKean felt queerly helpless. "You can't expect a man to change his nature because of your father's sudden death."

"I don't mean that," she said. "I know Joe Cotswold. He was a big boy, and his

father was hook-tender at Camp Three when I was a little girl. He is a man of wonderful fine principle and high ideals of what it is honorable for a man to do."

"How do you account for his actions when I caught him yesterday, and for my conversation with him this morning?" demanded McKean, with a fierce twinge of jealousy—for which he cursed himself.

"I think he has been influenced by the I. W. W. propagandists," she replied somewhat unsteadily. "Men like Joe Cotswold, you know, Mr. McKean, must go—up. The men behind this I. W. W. movement have been very clever. They have offered these thousands of striving souls a way to climb. Theirs is not the right way. It leads only to slavery and greater confusion—I am convinced of that; but it's a way, and no one else has pointed out one. That's what's the matter with Joe Cotswold—or, as he vehemently calls himself, the Timber Beast. I don't think he seeks either to injure me or to—love me."

"No!" growled McKean. "He only seeks to get you out of the way because he thinks you may get hurt, and his conscience is too tender for that."

"I tell you the fault does not lie with the Timber Beast!" she retorted angrily. "The master hand in this is an enemy to our country, and his trail leads straight from Germany!"

"You place no credence whatever in the legend, then?" he said, gazing at her shrewdly.

"I have told you that I do not," she replied, returning his stare. "My father was no more than human when you come to that, but he did not harm the Indians. What I do place credence in is the very material existence of the man from whose sleeve my father tore that piece of cloth which I found in his dead hand, and which the same man has since tried to recover. You did not bring it up here with you?"

"No," said McKean, and fell a little behind, as if he felt that further discussion was useless.

The afternoon was almost gone, and the shadows lay thick along the trail. The dusk beneath the trees deepened imperceptibly from green to softest black. Night crept up through the big timber, and the brooding stillness was intensified as the forest world settled down to sleep.

Suddenly McKean felt that there was some one near at hand who had no thought

of sleep, and to whom their voices, raised above the dull trampling of the ponies on the trail, had been distinctly audible. He strove to pierce the strange, subtly deepening dusk, frowning with the effort that he made.

There came a low whine. He jerked up the reins sharply, and his pony reared.

"You, there!" he shouted peremptorily.

Torry looked back over her shoulder and slackened her pace.

"What's the matter?" she demanded. "There's no one there," she added, looking to right and left.

McKean stared again. He could have sworn to having caught two shadows in that soft, baffling gloom—the shadows of a tall man and a huge, four-footed beast; but they had vanished like an illusion upon his second glance. He rode on to Torry's side, astonished to find that both he and the pony were trembling.

"There was something," he said. "My horse saw it, too, and, by George, we were both scared!"

"A bear, perhaps," said the girl.

"Why not the Wolf of Kahlotus?" demanded McKean sharply.

She would not even look at him, but urged her horse on; and there was no more talk between them until they rode up to the veranda steps at Big Cabin.

X

A MAN was standing there with a lantern. He held it up as they approached, disclosing a thick-set figure and a broad, pleasant face well covered by a heavy black beard.

"It's Black Jack Barry, down from the wheat country!" exclaimed Torry. "Klahowyah, Black Jack!" she cried.

The man shouted the word back to her in deep, round tones. Torry dismounted quickly and took him by the hand.

"How's everything, Black Jack? This is Mr. McKean."

"Coming along." Barry held out his hand to the government man. "Glad to see you in Kahlotus, Mr. McKean, and sorry for the business that brought you here."

Torry ran up the steps and into the broad, lighted hall. The men walked off to the stables with the horses, and McKean felt himself the subject of Barry's covert scrutiny. He stood it long enough to let the man get what he deemed a good look at him, and then turned and met his eyes



"WELL?" MCKEAN LOOKED AT HER FORBIDDINGLY. "WHAT OF YOUR SON? WHERE IS HE?"

squarely by the light of the lantern. Black Jack did not glance away.

"It's bad business, Mr. McKean. May I ask if you have any of your men up here?"

"Not yet," began McKean, and stopped, astonished, for he sensed in the man an enormous relief more significant than words. "I am going to have them here, though," he added quickly.

"But not for a day or two, perhaps," said Barry.

He went up the gangway in front of the stalls to the feed-box, and the ponies nickered in comfortable expectancy. Black Jack dumped the grain into their boxes and returned to where McKean was waiting.

"There's something wrong, sure enough," he said, picking up the lantern. "'Twasn't



"OH," TORRY FLASHED, "I HATE YOU! WHAT CAN YOU KNOW OF WHAT A MOTHER SUFFERS?"

any ghost Injun's wolf that murdered Square Bill Tolliver!"

"Ever see the old gentleman Miss Tolliver calls the cousin professor?" McKean demanded.

"Often and often."

"What's he like?"

"A mighty decent, good-hearted old brick. You saw his picture in the hall?"

"All right!" McKean nodded in the darkness. "What about the fine young party on the other wall?"

"Vrang von Kroner?"

"Hold up!" McKean cried. "I thought his name was plain Vrang."

"That's what we called him here in Kahlotus; but I've given you his full name. He's the professor's wife's nephew. He

hasn't been here since early in the summer of 1914. I understood he had gone back to fight for his country. He is, or was, a captain in the German army."

"I see," commented McKean. "And what do you think about the man Miss Tolliver's engaged to? I understand he's in France with her brothers."

"Chandler Chadeanne? He is, and a more worthless blackleg never went to France!"

McKean's heart gave a great thumping leap and stopped short.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Oh, Chadeanne is the son of a rich Easterner," replied Black Jack. "Handsome is no word, and he has a tongue to coax the birds off the trees. He didn't make any headway to speak of with Miss Torry, though, until Square Bill began to roar. Then he added to the story of his love for her that he was persecuted on her account. That turned the trick. The only thing that saved her from marrying him before he went to France was the way Square Bill acted."

"How did he act?"

"He acted just about the ugliest I ever saw, and I've seen men act some ugly."

"And Miss Tolliver?"

"Miss Torry? She acted ugly, too, and dared him to his face, which is a thing mighty few men in Kahlotus had the nerve to do. Then she seemed ashamed, and put it that somebody had to be sane, and it was all right, and she had the grit to wait. The boys sided in with Square Bill."

"She is not a person to nurse a hang-over on a thing like that?"

"No, indeed—not she nor any Tolliver."

"Might some one have called the wolf out of mistaken sympathy for her?"

Barry raised the lantern high and stared him suspiciously in the face.

"You know, Mr. McKean," he said, "there wasn't any mistaken sympathy for Miss Torry. The Kahlotus is a big country, but Chandler Chadeanne is well known in it. As for calling the wolf—well, you don't have to talk like that to me. I saw Square Bill, and I saw what was left of his horse, and if that was the job of any ghost wolf I'll eat my right hand right here!"

He strode on ahead, as if to avoid any further speech. As they ascended the veranda, Torry came to the front door.

"Supper is ready, and it is most awfully late. Hurry along!" she cried.

Supper proved a rather quiet meal. Torry seemed absorbed in her own thoughts, and Barry was most interested in the contents of his plate. McKean seized the opportunity to study Mrs. Barry, who was less watchful behind the shining barrier of the tea equipage than when he had met her before.

She was a heavy, solid person, plainly very limited, intensely respectable, and with the deep-seated, overbearing obstinacy so common to such natures. Watching her, McKean guessed that this was the great emotion of her life. He wondered about Barry, and how much this narrow obstinacy had influenced the man. She would never give up, that woman! She would not yield to life, death, or the law. She was weak—her face showed that; but she was the finished material of which the most perfect domestic tyrants are made. Then he met her eyes, and quickly turned his away, for fear she would read his thoughts in his glance.

They made a quiet party about the fire on the veranda, too. Mrs. Barry immediately took up her gray knitting, and Torry, sitting in a low chair beside her, unrolled a half-finished sock of the same shade.

"It is for the man to whom she is engaged, and who is unworthy of her," thought McKean.

If only Square Bill had not opposed her! The thought made him hot all over. He glanced at Barry, who sat placidly smoking, his eyes on the fire, and yet with a certain controlled watchfulness that seemed directed toward his wife. Then the district attorney knocked out his pipe and rose.

"I think I'll turn in," he said shortly. "Don't go anywhere to-night but from here to your room, Miss Tolliver, please, and lock your door. Good night!"

He went straight through the hall between the two portraits—one, to his excited imagination, seemed to stare at him derisively—up the staircase, two steps at a time, to his room. This time he did not listen at the window, or even look out. He had had enough of broken threads. He went straight to bed and fell asleep, his hands clenched at his sides, his face set in hard lines of determination.

He dreamed that Mr. James Tussy came and laughed at him, holding his sides as if in exhausting enjoyment of a huge joke. He took his finger and traced upon his up-

per lip and cheeks the sign of a Kaiser mustache. Then he thumbed his nose with his left hand, on which the mole showed plainly, at a huge American flag—a flag which, in the dream, seemed to cover half the world. McKean rushed at him and started wide awake.

The whole world was sunk in quiet. The intense, brooding stillness of the big timber had crept into the house. The moon had gone down behind the trees, and the room was in darkness. The illuminated face of McKean's watch on the little table beside the bed showed two o'clock. As he looked, a clock struck somewhere in sweet, solemn tones.

He was about to sink down on his pillow, fuming at the dream that brought back Mr. James Tussy and his excellent alibi, when he heard a stealthy step in the hall. Up he sprang and bent to the keyhole, listening acutely. The step sounded again, farther down the hallway, near the stairs.

Softly he unlocked the door, opened it, and looked out. A black shadow, fantastically long, wavered down the polished floor. It was thrown by Mrs. Barry.

She was in her night-dress, with a dark shawl thrown across her shoulders, her bare feet thrust into gray knit slippers, and she carried a small oil-lamp held high in her hand. She moved slowly and carefully, evidently on the alert for the least sign of an alarm.

She reached the stairway and started down, and her head, haloed by the dim, yellow light, sank from view. McKean came out of his door and followed. At the head of the stairs he could see the light shine faintly from the wide door of the dining-room into the hall. It was steady, as if she had either set it down or was standing motionless.

Step by step McKean crept down the stairs. The light shone palely on the benevolent forehead and mild eyes of the old cousin professor, but the dashing figure of Vrang von Kroner was enveloped in black shadow.

McKean stepped from the last tread and slipped noiselessly across the hall to the dining-room. The swing door to the pantry stood open, and Mrs. Barry was in there. In that instant she came hastily out into the dining-room. She carried a bottle of milk in one hand and a napkin-covered basket in the other.

She stood before the table, half-turned

toward him, her face rigid and strained with listening. Then, with a deep sigh and a quick gesture, as if impatient at her own fears, she pressed past McKean without seeing him, crossed the hall to the front door, and opened it.

"If she closes it now," thought McKean, "do I dare to open it?"

Mrs. Barry put down the basket, set the door back carefully with a bronze cat door-stop, lifted the basket once more, crossed the veranda, and went down the steps. The shadows seemed to move to meet her, and she was swallowed up by the trees.

McKean waited. Twenty minutes later by his watch she returned with a basket of different make, and empty, in her hands. She shut and locked the front door and bestowed the basket in the pantry. A moment she stood by the dining-room table, her face convulsed and wet with weeping. Then she took up the lamp, and McKean crept after her up-stairs.

XI

WHEN McKean awoke after a period of restless, uneasy sleep, the light of a gray day was streaming through the windows. In late fall the sun does not shine long in the big timber. The clock in the hall below struck the half-hour, and he looked at his watch. It was half past five to the minute. He dressed quickly and went downstairs quietly, but with no appearance of secrecy. He let himself out of the front door and stood at the top of the veranda steps.

Where was it easiest for a woman to go so sure-footedly in the dark? Involuntarily his eye crossed the wooded ground to the entrance of the trail to Skedee. Slowly he strolled down to the ambitious, hard-surfaced beginning of the trail. Even there, a few yards into the brush on either side, and an inexperienced man was as much lost as in a wide, uncharted sea.

He walked a little way along, glancing sharply from left to right. There was nothing to afford a clue, no distinguishing landmark; and rain had obliterated all signs of travel upon the hard surface of the trail.

Perhaps the woman had gone farther on, to the crumbly, volcanic soil of the forest, where the trail began in earnest. McKean consulted his watch and slowly shook his head. She had been gone twenty minutes from the time when she opened the front door. She could only have hurried to the

end of the hard surface and back, with not a moment left to enter the brush. And had she entered it? Twenty minutes of swift walking would have carried her to the end of the hard surface, given time for the exchange of the full basket for the empty one, and brought her back to the house.

McKean quickened his pace. He did not know why he had come so definitely to the conclusion that her errand had not taken her into the brush. There had, of course, been some one waiting for the basket of food. It had passed from hand to hand, and she and her confederate separated as swiftly as they had met. But why had they met, and for whom or what was the basket of food?

He came to the point where the hard surface dropped off into the loose, friable soil of the big timber, and examined it carefully with the uneasy consciousness of being watched all the time. No one had passed since he and Torry had ridden from Skedee the night before.

At last, with an impatient sigh, he turned back. More loose ends! Why did the woman carry food out there into the big timber? Could it be a love intrigue? Was that why she wept aloud at night? And did her earnestly expressed wish to get Torry removed from Big Cabin arise from a desire not to be caught or suspected by the girl?

Black Jack had finished breakfast when McKean reached the house. Torry had just come down, and Mrs. Barry sat behind the coffee-urn, red-eyed and sad, her weak face set in the only lines of strength it knew—those of determined obstinacy. She barely glanced up as McKean entered, but busied herself pouring his coffee.

Torry greeted him with a smile.

"You have been for a walk," she stated.

"I have," acknowledged McKean; "and I'm hungry, and I want to talk to you right after breakfast. No, no sugar, Mrs. Barry, thank you."

Mrs. Barry received the request with a dull movement of her swollen eyelids, and handed him the steaming cup without once lifting her eyes.

Breakfast over, McKean followed Torry to the fireplace on the veranda, and then, while he smoked, he told her all that he had seen. She heard it with a coolness that set him somewhat aback.

"I knew she walked about at night," she said. "She's been doing that for some

time. She's been terribly upset, poor thing, ever since her son went away. I have intended to speak to her, but I know the misery of restlessness you suffer when one you love is gone," she concluded in a low tone.

Her eyes sought the fire, and McKean felt that he and all the problems growing out of her father's tragic death were for the moment forgotten.

"It is quite possible, then," he said abruptly, "that she carries food every night to some person she meets on the Skedee trail?"

The girl started. He felt with an angry wrench that she had come back to him from a distance of thousands of miles.

"Oh—oh, yes, of course, it's possible. I think, under the circumstances, that we should follow her and see what she is up to. What do you think?"

"Exactly what you suggest," he replied. "Follow her, and see just what it's all about. We may find a thread that's not broken to lead us on to other things."

"Good enough!" agreed Torry. "We'll do it together."

McKean thrilled, and called himself a fool.

"She would be more likely to hear the two of us."

"All right, then, we'll have to risk that," she replied, evidently stimulated by the thought of coming adventure, and with no intention of being left behind. "I'll come to your door to-night as soon as she is at the head of the stairs. And now," she added, rising, "if you don't need me any more, I am going to write some letters."

"So am I," said he, and followed her into the hall.

He was almost up to the first landing on the wide staircase when suddenly she called him from the hall below.

"Mr. McKean!"

"Yes?"

He looked down over the banisters into her earnest, upturned eyes.

"Mind telling me where you put that piece of green cloth?"

"No, indeed. It's in a drawer of the safe in my office." He pointed downward to the portrait opposite the cousin professor's. "You know, that young man's uniform looks as if it was made of exactly the same material."

She studied the picture critically.

"You are right," she said at last.

"I understand his full name is Vrang von Kroner."

"Yes. Vrang is only his first name, but that was enough for us here in Kahlotus."

"And he is of the German nobility, and gone to fight for his country! I've seen some one who looks a lot like him, and something keeps telling me that it's important to remember who it is. But hang it," said McKean wryly, "I can't remember faces, only hands, and that fellow's aren't in the picture."

"Oh, he was rotten!" said Torry, with outspoken, boyish frankness. "He's not worth remembering, even if my father did stick up for him."

"I believe he tried to make love to you," smiled McKean.

She flushed and stared up at him, her eyes bright with anger.

"I don't see that that's any of your business," she replied, and flung into the library, slamming the door.

McKean went on to his room thoughtfully. Her father had backed this Herr Captain Vrang von Kroner, and who in thunder did he look like, anyway?

He seated himself by the window to write what notes he could on the whole confused affair. He believed that it persisted in associating itself in his mind with Mr. James Tussy, solely because his failure with that grand gentleman had been followed by the news of the mysterious tragedy in Kahlotus.

He sat there at the table, his chin in his hand, staring out at the great panorama of forest-covered hills and rolling, fertile plain, his keen eyes filmed in thought. Then, suddenly, he came back to the task in hand. If the man whom he planned to put on the job was to profit in the least by the visit McKean was making to Big Cabin, he must write the notes while all was fresh in his mind.

He began to write rapidly, his face set in absorbed concentration. At length he came to a full stop, and, lighting his pipe as an aid to further inspiration, he glanced out of the window once more.

He saw Torry Tolliver walking away from the veranda steps in the direction of the road that wound down to the river. She moved with the smooth, tireless stride that is the heritage of those born in the big timber, and the house soon hid her from view.

McKean pushed back his chair and rose. He was visibly disturbed, and could write

no more. The girl had gone to the river alone, in spite of the warning which he had carefully repeated to her—that she should either stay in the house or go clean away from Kahlotus. Either she was exceedingly foolhardy, or she knew from some satisfactory source that the cause for these warnings existed only in the mind of the warner.

He resumed his seat, then rose resolutely and took his hat. "Afterward" was a word that he despised. The most pitiful acknowledgment of weakness, he was always wont to declare, lay in an investigation to see how the accident had happened. Suppose he found himself forced to admit misfortune and defeat because, from some silly scruple, he had failed in his duty?

He set his teeth, and his eyes glittered at the very thought. He went down the stairs, passed out beneath the dripping trees, and strode away rapidly on the road to the river.

Torry had a start of him, and she was evidently a good walker. The road wound away down the hill, smooth, well-kept, and carefully ditched at the side to prevent flooding. The trees did not grow so densely as on the Skedee trail. Soon McKean came to a wide curve where a flurry of wind had uprooted several huge firs, and they lay crossed upon one another in a tangled mass of ruin. From this opening he could command a view of the country and the road below him; and he saw Torry Tolliver almost at once.

Some distance farther down the road made another sharp turn, and a solid concrete bridge took it across a ravine thickly grown with cottonwoods. The leaves had fallen from the trees, and the bridge was unconcealed. Torry stood upon it, and a man was with her. McKean, with a start and a swift intake of breath, identified him immediately as the Timber Beast.

There was something definite about the attitude of these two which made it clear that the meeting had not been accidental. After a moment they began walking slowly along, absorbed in conversation. Once the girl halted and made the free, earnest gesture that McKean had come to know and love. She was evidently very much taken up with what she said. Cotswold seemed listening no less earnestly, and twice, at different intervals, he shook his head emphatically.

McKean stood there at his lookout on the curve above them, fuming, but uncertain how to act. He was anxious to stand well in the girl's good graces, and he knew he would have small chance if she caught him spying upon her. And yet he had been warned that, so long as she remained in Kahlotus, every moment she was actually outside the house she was in danger. One warning had come from the very man who stood there talking to her now.

If the Timber Beast attacked her, or tried to carry her off, McKean was too far away to save her. But to go down and break in upon a private meeting, evidently agreed upon beforehand, was beyond him.

The two moved along on the sharp curve of the bridge, now partly screened by the slender stems of the bare-branched cottonwoods, now in full view of the watcher on the curve above them. Suddenly McKean started and stared past them, convinced that he was not the only witness to their talk. Where the bridge touched the road on the far side of the ravine there was a movement like a shadow in the brush. Something was creeping through the thick obscurity of the young firs and hemlocks up the bank to the bridge.

Torry turned away from Cotswold with a little movement eloquent of despair. The Timber Beast responded with a gesture as ardent as hers had been hopeless, and seized her in his arms. Catching her too suddenly for a struggle, he strained her close and bent down his face to hers.

There was a quick rush in the growth at the end of the bridge, the young trees and bushes swaying this way and that. Cotswold threw the girl from him with such force that she almost fell. Then, turning, he reached the bushes in a stride, and sprang at that moving something, which the next flash of a second would have brought into full view. There followed a crashing of brush and a sliding of rocks which disappeared in the depths of the ravine.

Torry put out her hands before her as stiffly as a jointed doll. Like a sleep-walker she backed off the bridge in the direction from which she had come, and the ever-green trees hid her from view. It was all over in a second or two, while McKean stood rooted, unable to move or speak. Then the disappearance of the girl released him like a spring, and he darted down the road.

He found Torry standing and staring

across the bridge. Her face was white, her mouth was set in a straight line, her hands were still thrust out in front, as if to ward off some attack.

"Mr. McKean, where did you come from?" she cried.

"I—I—up there," he said incoherently.

He ran past her on the bridge; but there was no one to be seen, either on the road or in the ravine. He turned and walked back to Torry.

"What happened?" he demanded brusquely.

She met his glance squarely, and a faint pink tinged her colorless cheeks.

"Why, that's what I don't know," she replied. "What are you doing down here?" she added, with more spirit.

McKean put his hand on her arm and started walking back up the hill.

"You know you must not go out alone," he said.

She made a quick little sound of distress. He saw that she was on the verge of weeping, and softened instantly.

"Never mind! Let's get back—that's the main thing now."

"But I want to explain," she protested falteringly. "What you said last night about the Timber Beast stuck in my mind. All this baffling mystery, this feeling of things happening all about you that you can't see, is driving me fairly crazy. I thought if I could meet Joe Cotswold, and talk to him, he might clear up anything he knew, and perhaps might help us with the rest. So when you went up-stairs I sent Yip to Peace Cabin with a note, and asked him to meet me down here. Yip came back, and said he'd seen Joe, and Joe would come; so I met him here. But he would only say no, no, and then—" The color scorched her throat and face, and her voice faltered. "He—well, he did try to make love to me, Mr. McKean," she said, with that astonishing honesty of hers, "just as you said. He was trying to kiss me when suddenly—I don't know what it was, but something started to scramble up on the bridge. I—Mr. McKean, I thought it was a wolf!"

"What did Cotswold do?" said McKean, striving to speak collectedly.

"He ran," she replied, "and literally jumped on whatever it was, and they rolled down into the ravine together."

McKean nodded. That much he had seen himself.

"Did Cotswold say anything?"

"He shouted something. I know, because I heard 'call' and 'off.' I could swear to those two words. So there must have been some one there, or at any rate he thought so."

They walked a little way in silence. Then McKean spoke again.

"Did Cotswold say you were safer away from here?"

"He begged me to leave Big Cabin for good. When I refused, he said I must marry him, and he would keep me safe."

They entered the grounds about the house.

"I wouldn't say anything of this to Mrs. Barry," said McKean.

She looked at him steadily, and he returned her gaze.

"No," he said. "I only mean that it's best to get things a little more cleared up before we take too many into our confidence—don't you think so?"

"Yes," she answered, "I do."

She put out her hand, he held it tightly for a moment, and they went into the house together.

That evening, when McKean came in to supper, Mrs. Barry handed him a letter.

"Somebody knows where you are," she commented pleasantly.

He made a little face and laughed.

"My stenographer," he said.

The letter was from Miss Myrtle Point. It began thus:

DEAR MR. MCKEAN:

Last night the office was broken into and the safe blown open. There is something queer about this robbery, and I have asked the newspapers not to notice it at all. All your papers are intact. The only thing taken was the envelope you put in the morning you went away. I mean the one marked "Wolf of Kahlotus, Exhibit A."

There followed a request for instructions in case of his continued absence, and the letter closed. McKean replaced it in its envelope and continued his meal. When they left the dining-room, he slipped it quietly into Torry's hand, and followed to the fireplace on the veranda.

Black Jack immersed himself in a newspaper, grunting his displeasure at the war news on the first and second pages. Torry took her seat in the low chair at Mrs. Barry's side, and the two women knitted busily. McKean moved about, too restless to sit down. At last, pleading letter-writing as an excuse, he went off to his room.

He shut the door and lighted the fire that was laid upon the hearth.

The scrap of green cloth had been stolen! His mysterious, invincible foe had scored again.

He sank into a chair and sighed heavily. The enemy had scored again. The words had a familiar sound. The same thing was happening all over the United States. While he had been planning, listening to warnings, falling in love—yes, he would be honest—and smoking, his tireless enemy had acted and—scored again!

He got up and paced the floor. It was not through lack of equipment that he had failed. The whole secret service of the United States was at his disposal, and yet a dangerous German organizer, badly wanted in Washington, and known to be on the Pacific Coast, had slipped through his fingers while he was foolishly attempting to establish the man's identity with Mr. James Tussy, a bland, innocuous idiot whose most serious ambition was to be able to buy good beefsteak for his dog.

Here again, in this Kahlotus business, he had played the game with so little realization of its serious results that he had allowed himself to fall in love with the girl—which took the keen edge from his efficiency, and left him baffled at every point, while his enemy scored. The valuable evidence of the piece of green cloth was lost for good. The bare fact of its removal showed that there was a great deal to be discovered. McKean wondered that this able foe had taken such trouble to secure it, and felt that his own ability had been heavily overestimated.

Take the business on the bridge that day. The girl might have been killed before his eyes, or dragged away to ignominy, and he would have been left none the wiser as to the causes behind it all. And in the expedition of to-night, by some fool play, all his own, he would probably draw another blank!

So he sat before the fire in wretched meditation, smoking cigarette after cigarette, listening to the chiming of the clock in the hall. As the hours crawled by with incredible slowness, his resistance stiffened. He sat up straighter, with clenched hands, all his senses alert. He would find an opening in to-night's adventure to admit of a blow at his enemy's stronghold!

There came the creak of a step in the passage. He started to his feet, listening,

and heard the softest touch of fingers on his door.

XII

He opened upon such absolute darkness that for a moment he hesitated. Then a hand touched his gropingly, and in the faintest thread of a whisper, Torry said:

"Let's go!"

Very stealthily McKean closed his door, and they stole away to the top of the stairs, just in time to see Mrs. Barry entering the dining-room. They waited to allow her to go on to the pantry, and then began to descend. As they reached the bottom step, she emerged from the dining-room into the hall. Instantly the man and girl crouched down.

"Here is where I have blundered again!" McKean thought.

In the dim yellow light of the lamp on the dining-room table, Mrs. Barry stood, turning her head from side to side and listening uneasily. To the two crouching so near it seemed impossible that she should not see them, or hear the beating of their hearts; but she was too much occupied with her own thoughts, and with what she was doing. Noiselessly she glided to the front door, opened it, and set it back with the bronze cat, as on the night before. Then, crossing the veranda, she slipped silently down the steps.

McKean and Torry followed, letting themselves down carefully, fearful lest a board should creak and so betray their presence. Once on the ground, it was easier. Their eyes soon became accustomed to the darkness, and they followed Mrs. Barry with no great difficulty to the entrance of the Skedee trail. A few yards along, McKean suddenly halted and put a detaining hand upon Torry's arm.

"Some one there!" he breathed.

From straight ahead there came a low whistle, and Mrs. Barry stopped short.

"It's only me," she said guardedly.

Then she moved on again. Torry started to follow, but McKean held her back.

"May have a light," he whispered.

As he spoke, a match sputtered blueely, a candle burned faint and steady in the trail before them, and a boyish face looked eagerly over it at the figure of Mrs. Barry advancing against the light as if pushed forward by the enormous, batlike shadow at her back.

"Good eats!" said the man, and smiled.

Mrs. Barry set down the basket. She took the candle from his hand, and, putting her arm about his shoulders, kissed him. Torry Tolliver started violently and clapped her hand to her mouth.

"Who is it?" whispered McKean fiercely. "Who?"

"Dan—Dan Barry," replied the girl, choking.

"Come away!"

McKean took her by the arm, and they crept softly back to the house. He led the way to the dining-room and sat down at the table facing the door. Torry stood opposite him with a white, tragic face.

"What does it mean?" she cried.

"Dan's not a coward!"

McKean looked across at her and laughed unpleasantly. Then the ugly look went out of his face, which turned haggard, and he sighed.

"In one way he is. It means," he said, "that we have found a mother who has failed in her duty."

"I don't understand you," interrupted Torry.

"Surely you know she is hiding him there to escape the draft until she can get him out of the country? That talk about South America was a little premature, that's all. She intended to send him there."

"I'm sure his father does not know of this!" cried Torry.

McKean looked down at his slender hands and thought, with an absurd flight of memory, of Mr. James Tussy's brown mole below the knuckle of his index finger on his left hand. Then he lifted his long lashes and shot the girl a keen glance.

"That," he said softly, "is what I propose to find out. Is Mr. Barry in the house to-night?"

"Yes," she gasped. "Shall I—"

McKean nodded.

"Yes. Get him down directly—if you don't mind."

Torry turned out of the room and climbed the stairs slowly and heavily, as if very tired. McKean rose and stood in the doorway. A fine mist was sifting in through the open front door, and the air in the hall was raw and damp.

"I am sorry," he said, "but you will have to move a little more quickly. We must get this business started before Mrs. Barry returns."

The girl paused and looked back at him over her shoulder. Though he could not

see, he felt the chill antagonism of her regard.

"What?" he exclaimed roughly. "You give your two brothers and the man you say you love, and hesitate over a thing like this? Good Heavens, are we Americans with a country to defend against a merciless enemy, or are we—"

She turned and ran swiftly up the staircase, leaving him with the words unfinished on his lips.

McKean walked to the front door and looked out. The fine rain pressed against his face like the touch of cool, soft fingers, and the outside world was dark and very still. Then, almost involuntarily, he turned and looked back into the hall. The lamp from the dining-room lit it with a dim and feeble radiance, blurring the open countenance of the cousin professor, and dimming pleasantly the arrogant haughtiness of Captain von Kroner. A shade crossed McKean's grave face.

"Wish I could see that fellow's hands!" he muttered.

There was a sound of footsteps in the up-stairs hall. He went quickly back to the dining-room and resumed his seat at the table opposite the door, just in time before Black Jack Barry entered.

Barry had hurriedly huddled on a shirt and trousers, and his feet were bare. His dark eyes stared in the white mask of his face, and a big vein stood out like a cord straight down his forehead; but when he spoke his voice was quiet.

"I am here, Mr. McKean."

Torry came in from the hall and stood at his side.

"You know what you are conniving at, Barry," replied McKean sternly. "It's a penitentiary offense. You knew that before you started!"

"I don't know what you are talking about." Black Jack's agitation was so great that he could hardly speak. "You may be the Federal attorney, and all that, but I will ask you by what right you turn decent folk out of their beds in the middle of the night, and then make fool statements that don't mean anything!"

"See here, Barry," said McKean, "I know more than you think I do, so it will save trouble for us all if you tell the truth sooner rather than later. Come, now, speak up! Who is that out there in the timber?"

Black Jack's defiance fell. He looked at his questioner in a queer, pathetic, helpless

way, and wrung his hands together once, hard, as if in the very extremity of grief and doubt.

"You mean at Peace Cabin? How do I know who all Cotswold harbors there?"

"No, I don't mean Peace Cabin, and I haven't mentioned Cotswold at all. You know what I mean. Come!"

Black Jack glanced around the room, striving to pierce the shadows, plainly seeking his wife. His gaze came back to McKean's keen blue eyes and rested there.

"Don't ask me, Mr. McKean," said he. "I beg you as man to man, don't ask me! Before God, it is not my secret, and He knows I have suffered from it, but I cannot tell. If it concerned no one but myself, I would. Tell!" he cried with sudden passion. "My God, it never would have happened—never!"

Torry put her hand on his arm.

"It's no go, dear old Black Jack," she said brokenly. "It is the law."

McKean continued to regard him with a face like stone.

"It is the law," he said briefly. "You know all about it. Your confederate is out there. Come, I'll give you another chance. What is this conspiracy that's going on?"

The man's face became openly defiant.

"No," he said sullenly. "It's not my business. I won't tell!"

"Then you are under arrest," remarked McKean.

Barry rubbed his forehead with his palm wearily.

"Very well," he said.

Torry gasped and caught his shoulder.

"Black Jack!" she cried. "Not that! No, oh, no!"

"It means disgrace and imprisonment," McKean went on in the same slow, bored way. "Great Heavens, why didn't George Washington have it mentioned in the Constitution that we were all to be taught what it means to have a country, as well as our A B C's? Miss Tolliver, I'm sorry to deprive you of a trusted man at a time like this, but I must take Barry to jail tomorrow."

"No, no! Not that, not that!"

Mrs. Barry's voice was harsh and strained and broken. She pushed past her husband and fairly clung to the table for support. The empty basket hung upon her arm, her shawl had fallen back, her hair was soaked with mist, and her face wet and marred by weeping.

Barry barely glanced at her.

"I have to go, Em'ly," he said. "It's only what I have foreseen. You'd best get me up a few things."

"Oh, Jack, no, no! It's my doing, Mr. McKean, all mine. He's kept quiet because he's the best husband in the world, and that's made me a bad wife and mother!"

"Well?" McKean looked at her forbiddingly. "What of your son? Where is he?"

"Oh," Torry flashed, "I hate you! How easy for you! What can *you* know of what a mother suffers, what makes her a coward and weak, what gives her the courage to be strong?" She put her arms about Mrs. Barry, who looked unlovely, almost ridiculous, in her nightgown and shawl. "Tell it, poor dear," she said soothingly. "Dan is in hiding out there, isn't he?"

She stood like a beautiful, compassionate embodiment of strength beside her two stricken elders, and Mrs. Barry sobbed against her bosom.

"You wanted him to escape the draft, didn't you?"

Mrs. Barry nodded.

"He is your only one, your baby, the only one you ever had. That's all you thought of, isn't it?"

Mrs. Barry nodded again, and began to weep—the deep, terrible weeping of a broken heart.

"And Black Jack didn't want to—"

"No, no!" sobbed Mrs. Barry.

"And neither did Dan," cadenced Torry.

"No, oh, no! Oh!"

The woman shuddered from head to foot, groaning as if in mortal agony.

"But you made them?"

"Yes, God help me, I see it all now!"

Torry moved aside and placed her within her husband's arm.

"Take her away, up-stairs," she said.

"It might be good to give her some bromid. It is in the medicine-chest—a teaspoonful is enough. I'm going out to get Dan. We'll see this thing through together. Here!" She lit another lamp and put the little one that Mrs. Barry had carried in Black Jack's free hand.

"Is all this true, Barry?" demanded McKean.

"Yes, Mr. McKean, it is."

"And the boy was to stay in hiding until you could get him to the coast and away to South America?"

Black Jack's lips compressed under his heavy beard. He nodded.

"And Mrs. Barry has been making up a kit for him? And she took Mr. Tolliver's riding-suit?"

"I would have paid for that."

"Oh, Black Jack!" burst out Torry.

She cast a fierce, indignant glance at McKean's impassive face. The government man rose.

"It's all right," he said. "A man must stand by his woman. We are all good Americans here, even if we are a bit in doubt what it means to have a country. Go on to bed, now. I will speak with you again later. I am going with Miss Tolliver after your boy."

XIII

BARRY turned and crossed the hall, with his wife stumbling at his side. Toilsomely and with bowed heads they mounted the stairs. Torry cried out sharply and leaned in the doorway of the dining-room, with her hand pressed hard upon her heart.

"Is that life?" she said. "Is that life? Then I have seen enough. I don't want it, I—can't!"

"That is not what your father would have said," replied McKean sternly. "Do you know where this young Barry is?"

At the mention of her father the girl's face underwent a change.

"You are right," she almost whispered. "I beg your pardon! Yes, I know where to find him."

"Get your gun, then," said McKean, "and come on."

"A gun? I don't want to take a gun."

"But I want you to," was the decided answer.

They went out together, and McKean shut the door gently. The air was raw and damp, but its heaviness was lightened by the strange, sweet smell of coming day. As they reached the entrance of the trail, rain began to fall with steady, sullen persistency.

"This rain," remarked McKean, "is like the nature of that poor Mrs. Barry—a vast deal of misdirected effort. Great guns, but it's dark!" he went on, in a lighter tone. "What a time for your Injun wolf, Miss Tolliver!"

As if in answer to his word, there sounded suddenly through the vast, brooding spaces of the big timber the long-drawn, wailing howl that he had heard before. It

came up through the night-blackened aisles, long and deep-throated, rising to a scream that echoed and reechoed as it died away. Again and again it sounded, blotting out the vast nocturnal silence of the big timber and filling the air with a fierce, blood-chilling menace.

Torry's shoulder struck McKean violently. He felt that she had squared off and was facing down the trail in the direction of the sound, with the automatic ready in her hand.

"That's it!" she panted. "Where is it? Is it coming, Mr. McKean?"

"I don't know." He stared alertly into the wall of darkness ahead. "That's the direction it always sounds from."

The howling died away with an avalanche of broken echoes, and the listening stillness of the big timber closed over them like the deep, still waters of the sea. Still they stood, their ears strained with listening, but there was no further sound.

"Mr. McKean," said Torry at last, "that cry was much nearer than usual!"

"And still in the same direction," he replied thoughtfully. "Let us go on."

"Wait! Mr. McKean, can there be any truth in this old story? Could it be possible—"

"Why, you have told me again and again that your father was good to the Indians, and I have heard from others that he earned his nickname fairly."

"But I was thinking—of Chan," she faltered. "Even if I *do*—marry him—there were some things—he has not made the best name for himself here in Kahlotus," she finished lamely.

"That's unfortunate!" said McKean dryly.

She was aware, then, of the man's shortcomings!

"The thing that howled is a live beast, and there is a possibility that it is coming this way. Shall we go back?"

"No, no!" she exclaimed indignantly. "I've come out to save my old playmate, Dan Barry. The idea of turning back is absurd, and you know it. Come on!"

They walked slowly in the darkness until the girl moved over to the side of the trail and struck her hand upon a tree.

"We turn off here," she said. "The path is narrow. You had better let me lead the way."

McKean followed her gropingly. Wet branches whipped against his face. He

stepped too high, and fell forward; he hardly lifted his feet at all, and stumbled over roots and rotting wood. Then Torry stopped, and he struck violently against her.

"The place is just ahead," she whispered. "Give me that electric torch, and stand where you are."

McKean obeyed. The girl went forward swiftly several yards, then halted and flashed the white light of the torch full upon her own uplifted face.

"It's Torry, Dan!" she cried.

The words were lost in the deep silence and there was no reply.

"Dan!" she called. "Dan! Oh, Dan Barry!"

On every side there sounded a broken confusion of shouting until, far away in the big timber, faintly and clearly came back the words:

"Dan Barry!"

Torry ran forward. By the light of the torch McKean could see a rude camp made partly beneath a huge fallen log, beside a small, clear spring. There were some tumbled blankets and the remains of a small fire. The basket Mrs. Barry had carried from the house was missing; and there was no one there.

"He's gone!" cried the girl. "Oh, Dan, Dan, where are you?"

Again the deep stillness resounded with a broken jumble of echoes that died away and away and then came back with weird clearness:

"Are you?"

"Mr. McKean!" Torry turned to him, trembling. "Don't visit this on any of them. We'll find him—he can't get out of the timber. Then we'll smuggle him out and let him come back of his own accord. Say you will, please! Oh, the trouble one woman can make!"

"It's a good plan," he agreed slowly. "Let's go home."

He started to turn back, but she beckoned him on.

"Let us keep down this way," she said. "There is a little clearing down here, and we can cross it and come back into the trail again. It won't be so dark, and the going is better."

With the thinning of the trees and the coming of dawn the way grew lighter as they went along. McKean could see that they were walking on a hillside, which commanded a view of several open spaces in the

timber. In one of these a gray rock thrust up, cold and wet, the color of the dreary day that was creeping in so reluctantly over the green hills. And cut sharp against the blackness of the trees McKean saw the figure of a man upon the rock. He stood easily, with a certain confidence in his attitude, looking down into the misty grayness below him, which was rapidly brightening into day.

"Miss Tolliver, look, quick! Is that Barry?"

The girl turned her head as he spoke, and in that flicker of a second he met her eyes. Then they both looked, but the man was gone. The rock stood out more clearly as the light grew, but there was no sign of a man and no movement in the clearing.

"There was a man!" exclaimed McKean, staring. "I tell you there was!"

"Something has happened to him," said Torry, following her own line of thought. "He is not the kind that runs away."

McKean looked at her and nodded.

"Let us go home," he said doggedly, "and start from there again."

XIV

DAY broke on Kahlotus cold and foggy. The rain of the night before had subsided to a dull drizzle, and the house at Big Cabin was banked in clouds of mist, which now and then lifted to the tops of the great trees and showed the muddy river, the dim, shrouded hills, and the distant wheat-lands shining freshly green where the light struck down upon them. Then the fog settled down again, and to step ten yards away from the veranda meant to be lost.

It was melancholy within the house, too. Mrs. Barry lay in bed, utterly broken down by remorse and by the disappearance of her son. Black Jack, after breakfast, offered McKean his hand.

"I'll find him, Mr. McKean. Dan's no coward. He's like me—he humored his mother too much. There's something wrong in his being away. The best way to manage it is the way Miss Torry suggests."

McKean took the proffered hand.

"I am at liberty to use my discretion," he replied; "and we Americans still only faintly know what it is to have a country. Yes, we must find him and—have him home from South America!"

Barry went off, and McKean walked to the fireplace on the veranda, where Torry sat in black reaction after the excitement

of the day and night before. There was a weight on his heart, too—a conscious sense of impending danger, all the more terrible because he was unable to define it, or to say from what direction it would come.

He felt that he had real reason to be depressed. He had only a mass of broken threads and unfinished incidents, meaningless without the connecting link which he had so far failed to supply. But they all pointed to some sinister and evil forces at work—forces which seemed to scorn his feeble efforts to check the machine that moved so smoothly and with such diabolical cleverness.

There was the death of Square Bill Tolliver, the boss of Kahlotus, several times a millionaire, in exact fulfilment of the Indian legend, and in accordance with the report from dwellers in the big timber of the appearance of some strange beast on the trails. It was absurd, incredible, a story to frighten silly children! The ghost of a wolf dead a hundred years that could tear a man's throat open, eat half a horse, and howl in a way to be heard for miles—why, it was surely the wildest nonsense a man was ever called upon to believe!

But facts were facts. He himself had heard the howl of the wolf; and though he would not acknowledge it to himself, and Torry would not speak of it, he believed it was the same animal that the Timber Beast had grappled with in the ravine by the bridge the day before.

Suppose some great wolf had been driven by hunger down into Kahlotus! It was possible, and would go far to explain things. But why had it only attacked Square Bill Tolliver, and left him dead and mangled, with a scrap of gold-embroidered green cloth in his hand that was worth blowing up a safe for?

Where did it get its food? Why did it lie concealed, except under very special conditions? How was it that the brute had decided that Torry Tolliver was to be its next victim, and people knew it and sought to warn her?

There was Cotswold. He was at his place all unharmed. Black Jack Barry had reported seeing him on the trail late yesterday afternoon. He must have known what he was going after, there on the bridge. No, no, the thing would not explain itself that way!

And then, besides the wolf, there was the well-established fact of a human agency

in Portland, as well as at Kahlotus. The letter that warned the girl might have been written by a friend. Mrs. Barry denied having any hand in it, and he believed her. Her only possible reason for desiring to remove Torry was to facilitate her son's escape to the coast.

Who, then, had written that letter of warning? Had he remained in Portland to blow off the door of the safe in the office? Or was he the man who had so theatrically returned the counterfeit scrap at the gate to Big Cabin, and whom they had seen standing on the rock in the dawn? McKean had only glanced at the figure when it disappeared, but there was something which made him feel that he could identify the man if he could only see him again. Indeed, he could not shake off the queer, haunting belief that he had already seen him before.

It was not Dan Barry. Torry, having listened to McKean's description of the man, declared that that was impossible. His figure was too tall and slender for Dan. He had a dashing ease of carriage that just escaped being a swagger, and he did not look like a native of the big timber. He must be a stranger, then, and there for no good purpose.

The mystery concerning Mrs. Barry had been explained. McKean felt that if he could get hold of the man he had seen on the rock, and make him give an account of himself, many of the difficulties that now seemed insuperable might be smoothed away. He determined to lose no time in locating him, if he had to rake the whole of Kahlotus.

His first impulse was to consult Torry. Then he looked at her sitting silent and preoccupied, her chin in her hand, her eyes fixed broodingly on the fire, and he decided to try to work the matter out alone. He turned on his heel and went off to the stables, where he found Black Jack saddling a horse.

"I am going to Skedee," Barry said, when McKean looked in at the door. "They may have heard of Dan there."

"I've a hunch," said McKean slowly, "that you'll have your ride for nothing."

He told Barry of the howling they had heard on the way to Dan's hiding-place. Black Jack's face went so white that McKean broke off in the midst of his recital.

"Oh, see here, man!" he cried impatiently. "That brute is no ghost Injun's

ghost wolf, and you know it. You told me so yourself. Use your brains a little! The creature may have attacked your son, and he had to run for it."

"But—but"—Barry came up close—"why should it attack my boy?"

"You mean it was set on?"

Black Jack nodded.

"That's just what I'd give the world to find out! Barry, isn't it quite possible that he was wearing Mr. Tolliver's clothes?"

"I know he was, sir."

"Well, now, look here!" McKean stammered in his eagerness. "That—that wolf had a go at Tolliver, if he didn't bring him down. The smell of those clothes was what sent him after your boy!"

"Mr. McKean, you don't think—"

McKean stared at him, his keen blue eyes brilliant.

"I think," he said, "that the keeper of your wolf is the man I saw on the rock!"

"You mean the man who keeps the woman at Peace Cabin?"

"What? A fair-haired woman who looks as if she was unhappy?"

Black Jack nodded again.

"How long has she been in here, Barry?"

"Well," was the slow answer, "I saw her first not long before Square Bill's death, and it's my belief she enticed him to it."

"Can't stop there!" cried McKean.

"And I don't mean to," Black Jack returned. "She wrote him a letter, and asked him to come to Peace Cabin to see her—said it was very important."

"How do you know that?"

"I saw the letter. He gave it to me to light my pipe with the day he rode to Skedee, when those fools went on that lemon-extract spree."

"You read it all?"

"Not on your life!" said Black Jack, with a shrug of contempt. "He made it into a twist and lit it. I touched my pipe off, and threw it on the ground. The paper spread open, and I couldn't help seeing the date and a few words. 'I pray you, as you believe in a square deal, come to Peace Cabin to-night,' it said; and it was signed 'Louise S.'"

"Well?"

"Well, the Timber Beast told me the woman's name was Louise Stuff, or Storff, or something like that."

"When did he tell you?"

"Oh, when she first came. Joe is a good boy, all right, only the I. W. W.'s got him

off on the wrong foot. I asked him about the woman."

"What did he say?"

"He said that the people that came to Peace Cabin were none of his business, or mine, so long as they paid."

"There was a man there with her?"

"Well, I judge so. There is a stranger in this neck of the big timber."

"In hiding?"

"I don't know that." Black Jack met McKean's gaze full, and a deep red dyed his bearded face. "Under the circumstances," he said, "I thought I was a poor one to be asking. I let well enough alone, and kept a still tongue; but there's a strange man here, all right."

"You've spoken to him, have you?"

"Not me! I've never come up with him; but I know Square Bill did."

"He did?"

"Oh, yes, and more than once."

"Did the man come here to Big Cabin?"

Black Jack considered a moment.

"Not that I know of," he said at length; "but I am mostly up in the wheat district, so I can't say for sure. I do know that he was the cause of the row between Joe Cotswold and Square Bill. Tolliver was not the one to throw it up to a man because he was an I. W. W.—no, nor because he wanted to marry his daughter, either."

"He quarreled with Cotswold at Big Cabin, did he?"

"Yes, I was right here. Mr. Tolliver rode in from Skedee, and he looked ugly, the way he did when he was all roiled up. Joe was there in the library, waiting for him. What was said, I don't know; but suddenly Square Bill burst out cursing so loud my wife thought he had found out about Dan. He flung the library door back with a bang, called Joe a dirty German spy, and roared never to let him lay eyes on him again. Joe went out with his head up, but he looked like death. And Manuel—him that was shot in the lemon-extract bust-up—told me he had seen the stranger join the boss no distance at all from Skedee."

McKean listened, startled. The story dovetailed with Torry's account of the same happening; only she had not spoken of the stranger in the big timber.

"Why did you not speak of this before, Barry?"

"Well, as I told you, I couldn't very decently, things being the way they were

with us. And then I couldn't see what bearing it could have on the boss's death. Joe Cotswold had no hand in that."

"You think not?"

"Mr. McKean, look here—I know Joe!"

It was what Torry had said when she and McKean were talking about Cotswold.

"Barry," the government man suddenly exclaimed, "don't go to Skedee! Help me to find that stranger. He is the one we need to set our picture-puzzle together!"

"I might as well go there," replied Black Jack. "The only places I have seen him were on the Deep Creek trail near Kingfisher Crossing, and on the way to Skedee."

McKean stared at him, fascinated.

"Have you ever seen the woman with him?"

"Only once, and that at a distance."

"Do you really believe Tolliver went to Peace Cabin the night he was killed?"

"Yes, sir, I do. That accounts for his lateness. He hadn't been killed very long when Miss Torry found him. Well, I'll be back in a little while and report."

He mounted the pony and was about to ride away, but McKean put his hand on the bridle-rein.

"Barry," he said earnestly, "has that man ever been near enough for you to see the color of the clothes he had on?"

Black Jack drew in the impatient pony.

"Whoa! Yes—whoa, be done, will you? Yes."

"Did you ever see him in a suit of rich, dark green?"

"All the time." Black Jack seemed surprised. "All the time," he repeated, and rode away.

McKean hurried away from the stables and up the steps of the veranda two at a time. Torry had gone from the fireplace, and the rain was beginning to fall in great, splashing drops. It whispered in the giant firs and dripped from the broad eaves of the house. Rain-squalls drifted across the soft, green face of the rolling wheat-lands, great billowy clouds hung over the evergreen hills like misty veils.

The shod hoofs of Barry's pony rang out loudly on the hard roadway. With a quick clatter he whirled the animal back again.

"Will you be here when I get back?" he shouted.

McKean shook his head.

"I don't know!" he cried. "I'm on my way to Peace Cabin."

(To be concluded in the April number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

The Golden Scorpion*

AN ORIENTAL MYSTERY

By Sax Rohmer

Author of "The Yellow Claw," "Dr. Fu-Manchu," etc.

DR. KEPPEL STUART, a physician with a humdrum practise in a quiet part of London, is visited by a rather unusual patient—a beautiful girl who gives her name as Mlle. Dorian, and who complains of insomnia. One evening she calls when the doctor is out, and waits for him; but Stuart, coming in unexpectedly, finds her searching his desk. She begs him to forgive her, hinting that she is acting under compulsion, and warning him that he is in danger. Stuart connects her warning with the strange figure of a cowed man, of whom he has caught a glimpse outside his window at night.

Stuart becomes involved in another strange affair when Inspector Dunbar, of the London detective service, consults the doctor about a puzzling case that he is investigating. He shows Stuart a fragment of a broken ornament which has been found in the clothes of a man drowned in the Thames, and which the doctor identifies as the tail of a golden scorpion. He asks if Stuart knows anything of an Oriental sect or cult of scorpion-worshippers. Stuart, who has lived in the East, recalls an incident in a Chinese city, when his rickshaw boy displayed great terror at the sight of a veiled figure whom the boy called "the Scorpion"; but beyond this he can throw no light on the subject.

It appears that some mysterious and highly malignant power is at work, which is suspected of having caused the sudden deaths of a number of eminent men in various countries—among the victims being the Grand Duke Ivan, a famous soldier; Henrik Ericksen, the Norwegian electrician; and Sir Frank Narcombe, a leading English surgeon. A clever French detective, M. Gaston Max, has devoted himself to the investigation of this extraordinary case, and it is on instructions received from Paris that the London police are acting. For this reason it is a shock when Sergeant Sowerby, one of Inspector Dunbar's subordinates, reports that the dead man in whose clothes the golden scorpion's tail was found has been identified as Max. The inspector follows up this disquieting piece of news by warning Dr. Stuart, just as Mlle. Dorian warned him, that he is in danger.

That evening Stuart is sitting in his study, when suddenly a strange ray of blue light flashes into the room, and, narrowly missing the doctor's head, burns off the mouthpiece of his telephone. Then a man comes in and announces that he is Gaston Max, and that one of the unknown enemies has just slipped away after failing to kill Stuart with the burning ray. Max smiles on learning that he is supposed to be dead, and the story is carried on by his narrative of his adventures in the campaign against the Scorpion—whatever that individual or organization may be.

Max has been following the trail of a beautiful Oriental girl, Zâra el Khalâ, who seems to have lured the Grand Duke Ivan to Paris, where he had a fatal seizure in the theater at which she was dancing. When she leaves Paris for London, Max follows. On the Channel boat he recognizes a man whom he believes to be an agent of the enemy, and whom he knows as Le Balafré, the scarred man. He tracks this fellow to the East End of London. Assuming the character of Charles Malet, a taxi-driver, Max watches the man, and frames a plan to entrap him. Meeting Le Balafré in a bar-room, he boasts that he has papers containing information about a mysterious conspiracy that he is unearthing. These documents, he says, he is about to deposit with a friend for safe-keeping. As Max expected, the scarred man concludes that the papers mean danger to his associates, and resolves to get them at any cost. He trails Malet, or Max, to the house of Dr. Stuart—whose acquaintance the supposed taxi-driver has chanced to make—and is watching outside the window when Max gives the doctor a package, which, as a matter of fact, contains only blank paper. It is this that brings Stuart into the danger of which the reader has already heard.

From Stuart's house Max takes his cab to an empty stable not far away, in which he garages the vehicle. As he comes out, he suspects that Le Balafré will be lying in wait for him outside the door. Dropping to the floor, he cautiously peers out of the doorway with his head close to the sill, and sees the scarred man standing there with a sand-bag in his right hand and a pistol in his left.

XVIII

INCH by inch I thrust my pistol forward, the barrel raised sharply. I could not be sure of my aim, of course, nor had I time to judge it carefully. I fired. The bullet was meant for the right wrist of

Le Balafré, but it struck him in the fleshy part of his arm. Uttering a ferocious cry, he leaped back, dropped his pistol, and took the sand-bag in his left hand. Then, perceiving me as I sprang to my feet, he lashed at me fiercely with his noiseless weapon. I raised my left arm to guard my skull, and

* This story began in the January number of MURSEY'S MAGAZINE

sustained the full force of the blow upon my elbow.

I staggered back against the wall, and my own pistol was knocked from my grasp. My left arm was temporarily useless, but the man with the scar could not use his right arm. I had the advantage!

He hurled himself upon me. His onset was so fierce that he succeeded in grasping me by the throat with his left hand. Flat against the wall he held me, and he began, his teeth bared in that fearful grin, to crush the life from me.

To such an attack there was only one counter. I kicked him savagely, and the death-grip relaxed. I writhed, twisted—and was free! As I regained my freedom I struck up at him, and by great good fortune caught him upon the point of the jaw.

He staggered. I struck him over the heart, and he fell. I pounced upon him, exulting, for he had sought my life, and I knew no pity.

Yet I had not thought so strong a man would choke so easily. For some moments, when my hands had left his throat, I stood looking down at him, believing that he sought to trick me. But it was not so. His affair was finished!

I listened. The situation in which I found myself was full of difficulty. An owl screeched somewhere in the trees, but nothing else stirred. The sound of the shot had not attracted attention, apparently.

I stooped and examined the garments of the man who lay at my feet. He carried a travel coupon to Paris, bearing that day's date, and some other papers; but, although I searched all his pockets, I could find nothing of real interest until in an inside pocket of his coat I felt some hard, irregularly shaped object. I withdrew it, and in the moonlight it lay glittering in my palm—a *golden scorpion!*

The little emblem had apparently been broken in the struggle. The tail was missing, nor could I find it; but I must confess that I did not prolong the search.

Some chance effect produced by the moonlight shadows, and by the presence of that recently purchased ticket, gave me the idea upon which I immediately proceeded to act. Satisfying myself that there was no mark upon any of his garments by which the man could be identified, I unlocked from my wrist an identification disk which I habitually wore there, and locked it upon the wrist of the man with the scar.

Clearly, I argued, he had been detailed to despatch me and then to leave at once for France. I would make it appear that he had succeeded.

Behold me, ten minutes later, driving slowly along a part of the Thames Embankment which I chanced to remember, with a gruesome passenger riding behind me in the cab. As I kept a sharp lookout for a spot which I had noted one day during my travels, I was reflecting how easily one could commit murder in London, when a constable ran out and intercepted me.

Mon Dieu, how my heart leaped!

"I'll trouble you for your name and number, my lad," he said.

"What for?" I asked. Remembering an English idiom, I added: "What's the matter with you?"

"Your lamp's out!" he cried. "That's what's the matter with me!"

"Oh!" said I, climbing from my seat. "Very well, I'm sorry. I didn't know. Here is my license."

I handed him the little booklet and began to light my lamps, cursing myself for a poor artist because I had forgotten to do so.

"All right!" he replied, and handed the license back to me. "But how the devil you've managed to get *all* your lamps out I can't imagine!"

"This is my first job since dusk," I explained, hurrying around to the tail-light.

"And *he* don't say much!" remarked the constable.

I replaced my matches in my pocket and returned to the front of the cab, making a gesture as of one raising a glass to his lips, and jerking my thumb across my shoulder in the direction of my unseen fare.

"Oh, that's it!" said the constable, and moved off.

Never in my whole career have I been so glad to see the back of any man!

I drove on slowly. The point for which I was making was only some three hundred yards farther along, but I had noted that the constable had walked off in the opposite direction. Therefore, arriving at my destination—a vacant wharf open to the road—I pulled up and listened. Only the wash of the tide upon the piles of the wharf was audible.

I opened the door of the cab and dragged out *Le Balafré*. Right and left I peered, truly like a stage villain, and then hauled my unpleasant burden along the irregularly paved path and onto the little wharf. Out

in midstream a police patrol was passing, and I stood for a moment until the creak of the oars grew dim.

Then there was a dull splash far below—and silence again. Gaston Max had been consigned to a watery grave!

Returning again to the garage, I wondered very much who Le Balafre could have been. Was it possible that he was the Scorpion? I could not tell, but I had hopes of finding out very shortly.

I had settled up my affairs with my landlady, and had removed all papers and other effects from my apartments. In the garage I had placed a good suit of clothes and a few other necessities, and by telephone I had secured a room at a West End hotel.

The cab returned to the stable, I locked the door, and, by the light of one of the lamps, shaved off my beard and mustache. My uniform and cap I hung up on the hook where I usually left them after working hours, and changed into the suit which I had placed there in readiness. I next destroyed all evidences of identity and tidied up the place. I extinguished the lamp, went out, and locked the door behind me. Carrying a traveling-grip and a cane, I set off for my hotel.

Charles Malet had disappeared!

XIX

ON the corner opposite Dr. Stuart's residence stood a house which was "to be let or sold." From the estate-agent whose name appeared upon the sign-board I obtained the keys, and I had a duplicate made of the one that opened the front door. It was a simple matter, and the locksmith returned both keys to me within an hour. I informed the agent that the house would not suit me.

Nevertheless, having bolted the door, in order that prospective purchasers might not surprise me, I camped out in an upper room all day, watching from behind the screen of trees every one who came to the house of Dr. Stuart. Dusk found me still at my post, armed with a pair of good binoculars. Every patient who presented himself I scrutinized carefully.

Finding, as the darkness grew, that it became increasingly difficult to discern the features of visitors, I descended to the front garden, and resumed my watch from the lower branches of a tree which stood some twenty feet from the roadway. At intervals I crept from my post and surveyed the lane

upon which the window of the consulting-room opened, and also the path leading to the tradesmen's entrance, from which one might look across the lawn and in at the open study windows.

It was during one of these tours of inspection, and while I was actually peering through a gap in the hedge, that I heard the telephone-bell. Dr. Stuart was in his study, and I heard him speaking.

I gathered that his services were required immediately at some institution in the neighborhood. I saw him take his hat, stick, and bag from the sofa and go out of the room. Then I returned to the front garden of my vacant house.

For some time no one else appeared. A policeman walked slowly up the road and flashed his lantern in at the gate of the house that I had commandeered. His footsteps died away. Then, faintly, I heard the hum of a powerful motor. I held my breath. The approaching car turned into the road at a point above me to the right, came nearer, and stopped before Dr. Stuart's door.

I focused my binoculars upon the chauffeur. It was the brown-skinned man!

Nom d'un nom, a woman was descending from the car! She was enveloped in furs, and I could not see her face. She walked up the steps to the door and was admitted.

The chauffeur backed the car into the lane beside the house.

My heart beating rapidly with excitement, I crept out by the farther gate of the drive, crossed the road at a point fifty yards above the house, and, walking very quietly, came back to the tradesmen's entrance. Into its enveloping darkness I glided, and went on until I could peep across the lawn.

The elegant visitor, as I had hoped, had been shown, not into the ordinary waiting-room, but into the doctor's study. She was seated with her back to the window, talking to a gray-haired old lady—probably the doctor's housekeeper. Impatiently I waited for this old lady to depart. The moment that she did so, the visitor stood up, turned, and—it was Zâra el Khalâ.

It was only with difficulty that I restrained the cry of triumph which arose to my lips. On the instant that the study door closed, Zâra el Khalâ began to try a number of keys, which she took from her hand-bag, upon the drawers of the bureau.

"So!" I said. "They are uncertain of the drawer!"

Suddenly she desisted, looking nervously at the open windows; then, crossing the room, she drew the curtains. I crept out into the road again, and by the same round-about route came back to the empty house. Feeling my way in the darkness of the shrubbery, I found a motor-bicycle which I had hidden there. I wheeled it down to the farther gate of the drive and waited.

I could see the doctor's door, and I saw him returning along the road. As he appeared, from somewhere—I could not determine from where—there came a strange, uncanny wailing sound, a sound that chilled me like an evil omen.

Even as it died away, and before Dr. Stuart had reached his door, I knew what it portended. Some one, hidden I knew not where, had warned Zâra el Khalâ that the doctor was returning. But stay—perhaps that some one was the dark-skinned chauffeur!

How I congratulated myself upon the precautions which I had taken to escape observation! Evidently the watcher had placed himself at a point where he could command a view of the front door and the road.

Five minutes later the girl came out, the old housekeeper accompanying her to the door, and the car emerged from the lane. Zâra el Khalâ entered it and was driven away. I could see no third person inside the vehicle, and no one was seated beside the chauffeur. I started my machine and leaped in pursuit.

As I had anticipated, the route was eastward, and I found myself traversing familiar ground. From the southwest to the east of London whirled the big car of mystery—and I was ever close behind it. Sometimes, in the crowded streets, I lost sight of my quarry for a time, but always I caught up again, and at last I found myself whirling along Commercial Road not fifty yards behind the car.

Just by the canal bridge a drunken sailor lurched out in front of my wheel. Only by twisting perilously right into a turning called, I believe, Salmon Lane, did I avoid running him down.

Sacré nom, how I cursed him! The lane was too narrow for me to turn, and I was compelled to dismount and to wheel my motor-bicycle back to the highroad. The yellow car had vanished, of course, but I took it for granted that it had followed the main road. At a dangerous speed,

pursued by execrations from the sailor and all his friends, I set off eastward once more, turning to the right down West India Dock Road.

Arriving at the dock, and seeing nothing ahead of me but desolation and ships' masts, I knew that that inebriated pig had spoiled everything. I could have sat down upon the dirty pavement and wept, so mortified was I! For if Zâra el Khalâ had secured the envelope, I had missed my only chance.

However, *pardieu!* I have said that despair is not permitted by the Service de Sûreté. I rode home to my hotel, deep in reflection. Whether the girl had the envelope or not, at least she had escaped detection by the doctor; therefore, if she had failed, she would try again. I might as well sleep in peace until the morrow.

Of the following day, which I spent as I had spent the preceding one, I have nothing to record. At about the same time in the evening the yellow car again rolled into view, and on this occasion I devoted all my attention to the dark-skinned chauffeur, upon whom I directed my glasses.

As the girl alighted and spoke to him for a moment, he raised the goggles that he habitually wore, and I saw his face. A theory which I had formed on the previous night proved to be correct. The chauffeur was the Hindu, Chunda Lal!

As Zâra el Khalâ walked up the steps, he backed the car into the narrow lane, and I watched him constantly. Yet, watch as closely as I might, I could not see where he concealed himself in order to command a view of the road.

On this occasion, as I knew, Dr. Stuart was at home. Nevertheless, the girl stayed for close upon half an hour, and I began to wonder if some new move had been planned.

Suddenly the door opened, and she came out. I crept away through the bushes to my bicycle, and wheeled it to the drive. I saw the car roll away; but fortune was in playful mood, and my own engine refused to start. Ten minutes later, when at last I aroused a spark of life in the torpid machine, I knew that pursuit would be futile.

Since this record is intended for the guidance of those who may take up the quest of the Scorpion, either in cooperation with myself or, in the event of my failure, alone, it would be profitless to record my disasters. Very well, I had one success.

One night I pursued the yellow car from Dr. Stuart's house to the end of Limehouse Causeway without once losing sight of it.

A string of trucks from the dock, drawn by a traction-engine, checked me at the corner for a time, although the yellow car passed; but I raced furiously on, and by great good luck overtook it near the Dock Station. From thence onward, pursuing a strangely tortuous route, I kept it in sight to Canning Town, where it turned into a public garage. I followed—to purchase petrol.

Chunda Lal was talking to the man in charge; he had not yet left his seat. But the car was empty!

At first I was stupid with astonishment. Then I saw that I had really made a great discovery. The street into which I had injudiciously followed Le Balafré lay between Limehouse Causeway and Rope-maker Street, and it was at no great distance from this point that I had lost sight of the yellow car. In that street—which, according to my friend the policeman, was "nearly all Chinese"—Zâra el Khalâ had descended. In that street was the Scorpion's lair!

XX

I COME now to the conclusion of this statement and to the strange occurrence which led to my proclaiming myself. The fear of imminent assassination, which first had prompted me to record what I knew of the Scorpion, had left me since I had ceased to be Charles Malet. I did not doubt that the disappearance of Le Balafré had been accepted by his unknown chief as evidence of his success in removing *me*. Therefore I breathed more freely—and more freely still when my body was recovered from the river!

Yes, my body was recovered from Han-over Hole. I read of it—a very short paragraph, but it is the short paragraphs that matter—in my morning paper. I knew then that I should very shortly be dead indeed—officially dead. I had counted on this happening before, you understand; for I more than ever suspected that the Scorpion knew me to be in England, and I feared that he would "lie low," as the English say.

However, since a fortunate thing happens better late than never; I saw in this paragraph two things—first, that the enemy would cease to count upon Gaston Max;

second, that the Scotland Yard commissioner would be authorized to open the first part of this statement, which had been lodged at his office two days after I landed in England—the portion dealing with my inquiries in Paris, with my tracking of Le Balafré to Bow Road Station, and with my observing that he showed a golden scorpion to the chauffeur of the yellow car.

This would happen because Paris would wire that the identification disk found on the dead man was that of Gaston Max. Why would Paris do so? Because my reports had been discontinued since I had ceased to be Charles Malet, and Paris would be on the watch for evidence of my whereabouts. My reports had discontinued because I had learned that I had to do with a criminal organization of whose ramifications I knew practically nothing. Therefore I took no more chances. I died!

I return to the night when Inspector Dunbar, the grim Dunbar of Scotland Yard, came to Dr. Stuart's house. His appearance there puzzled me. I could not fail to recognize him, for as dusk had fully come I had descended from my top window and was posted among the bushes of the empty house, where I commanded a perfect view of the doctor's door. The night was unusually chilly—there had been some rain—and when I crept around to the lane bordering the lawn, hoping to see or hear something of what was taking place in the study, I found that the windows were closed and the blinds drawn.

Luck seemed to have turned against me. That night, at dusk, when I had gone to a local garage where I kept my motor-bicycle, I had found that the back tire was perfectly flat, and had been forced to contain my soul in patience while the man repaired a serious puncture. The result was, of course, that for more than half an hour I had not had Dr. Stuart's house under observation; and a hundred and one things can happen in half an hour.

Had Dr. Stuart sent for the inspector? If so, I feared that the envelope was missing, or at any rate that he had detected Zâra el Khalâ in the act of stealing it, and had determined to place the matter in the hands of the police. It was a maddening reflection!

Again, I shrewdly suspected that I was not the only watcher of Dr. Stuart's house. The frequency with which the big yellow car drew up at the door a few moments

after the doctor had gone out could not be due to accident. Yet I had been unable to detect the presence of any other watcher, nor had I any idea of the spot where the car remained hidden—if my theory was a correct one. Nevertheless, I did not expect to see it come along while the inspector remained at the house—always supposing that Zâra el Khalâ had not yet succeeded.

I wheeled out my machine and rode to a certain tobacconist's shop at which I had sometimes purchased cigarettes. He had a telephone in a room at the rear, which customers were allowed to use on payment of a fee. The shop was closed, but I rang the bell at the side door, and obtained permission to use the telephone upon pleading urgency.

I had assiduously cultivated a natural gift for mimicry, having found it of inestimable service in the practise of my profession. It served me now. I had worked in the past with Inspector Dunbar and his subordinate, Sergeant Sowerby, and I determined to trust to my memory of the latter's mode of speech.

I rang up Dr. Stuart and asked for the inspector, saying that Sergeant Sowerby spoke from Scotland Yard.

"Hello!" cried the inspector. "Is that you, Sowerby?"

"Yes," I replied in Sowerby's voice. "I thought I should find you there. About the body of Max—"

"Eh?" said Dunbar. "What's that—Max?"

I knew immediately that Paris had not yet wired, therefore I told him that Paris had done so, and that the disk numbered 49685 was that of Gaston Max. He was inexpressibly shocked, deploring the rashness of Max in working alone.

"Come to Scotland Yard," I said, anxious to get him away from the house.

He said he would be with me in a few minutes. I was racking my brains for some means of learning what business had taken him to Dr. Stuart, when he gave me the desired information spontaneously.

"Sowerby, listen," said he. "It's the Scorpion case right enough! That bit of gold found on the dead man is not a cactus stem; it's a scorpion's tail!"

So they had found what I had failed to find! It must have been attached, I concluded, to some inner part of Le Balafré's clothing. There had been no mention of Zâra el Khalâ; therefore, as I rode back to

my post, I permitted myself to assume that she would come again, since presumably she had thus far failed. I was right.

Morbleu! Quick as I was, the car was there before me! I had not overlooked this possibility. I dismounted at a good distance from the house, and left the motor-bicycle in some one's front garden. As I turned out of the main road, I saw Dr. Stuart and Inspector Dunbar approaching a rank upon which two or three cabs usually stood.

I watched Zâra el Khalâ enter the house, a beautiful woman most elegantly attired; and then, even before Chunda Lal had backed the car into the lane, I was off to the spot at which I had abandoned my bicycle. In little more than half an hour I had traversed London and was standing in the shadow of that high, blank wall to which I have referred as facing a row of wooden houses in a certain street adjoining Limehouse Causeway.

You perceive my plan? I was practically sure of the street. All I had to learn was which house sheltered the Scorpion.

I had already suspected that this was to be an unlucky night for me. *Nom d'un petit bonhomme*, it was so! Until an hour before dawn I crouched under that wall and saw no living thing except a very old Chinaman, who came out of one of the houses and walked slowly away. The other houses appeared to be empty. No vehicle of any kind passed that way all night.

Turning over in my mind the details of this most perplexing case, it became evident to me that the advantages of working alone were now outweighed by the disadvantages. The affair had reached a stage at which ordinary police methods should be put into operation. I had collected some of the threads; the next thing was for Scotland Yard to weave these together while I sought for more.

I determined to remain dead. It would afford me greater freedom of action. The disappearance of Le Balafré, which must by this time have been noted by his associates, might possibly lead to a suspicion that the dead man was *not* Gaston Max; but if no member of the group obtained access to the body, I failed to see how such a suspicion could be confirmed.

I reviewed my position.

The sealed letter had achieved its purpose in part. Although I had failed to

locate the house from which these people operated, I could draw a circle on the map within which I knew it to be; and I had learned that Zâra el Khalâ and the Hindu were in London. What it all meant—to what end the Scorpion was working—I did not know; but, having learned so much, I did not despair of learning more.

It was now imperative that I should get into touch with Dunbar, and that I should find out exactly what had occurred at Dr. Stuart's house. Accordingly I determined to call upon the inspector at Scotland Yard. I presented myself toward evening of the day following my vigil in Limehouse, sending up the card of a French confrère, for I did not intend to let it be generally known that I was alive.

Presently I was shown up to a bare and shining room, which I remembered having visited in the past. I stood just within the doorway, smiling. Inspector Dunbar rose, as the constable went out, and stood looking across at me.

I had counted on striking him dumb with astonishment. He was Scottishly unmoved. "Well," he said, coming forward with outstretched hand, "I'm glad to see you. I knew you would have to come to us sooner or later!"

I felt that my eyes sparkled. There was no resentment within my heart. I rejoiced.

"Look," he continued, taking a slip of paper from his note-book. "This is a copy of a note I left with Dr. Stuart some time ago. Read it."

I did so, and this is what I read:

The name of the man who cut out the lid of the cardboard box and sealed it in an envelope—Gaston Max.

The name of the missing cabman—Gaston Max.

The name of the man who rang me up at Dr. Stuart's and told me that Gaston Max was dead—Gaston Max.

I returned the slip to Inspector Dunbar. I bowed.

"It is a pleasure and a privilege to work with you, inspector," I said.

This statement is nearly concluded. I spent the whole evening in the room of the assistant commissioner, discussing the matters herein set forth and comparing notes with Inspector Dunbar. One important thing I learned—that I had abandoned my nightly watches too early; for one morning, just before dawn, some one who was *not* Zâra el Khalâ had paid a visit to the house

of Dr. Stuart. I decided to call upon the doctor.

As it chanced, I was delayed, and did not arrive until so late an hour that I had almost decided not to present myself—when a big yellow car flashed past the taxicab in which I was driving!

Nom d'un nom, I could not mistake that yellow car! This was within a few hundred yards of the house of Dr. Stuart, you will understand.

I instantly dismissed my cabman and proceeded to advance cautiously on foot. I could no longer hear the engine of the car, which had passed ahead of me, but I knew that it could run almost noiselessly. As I crept along in that friendly shadow cast by a high hedge which had served me so well before, I saw the yellow car. It was standing on the opposite side of the road.

I reached the tradesmen's entrance.

Suddenly, from my left, in the direction of the back lawn of the house, there came a singular crackling noise, and I discerned a flash of blue flame resembling faint summer lightning. A series of muffled explosions followed.

Then, in the darkness, I tripped over something that lay along the ground at my feet—a length of cable, it seemed to be. Stumbling, I uttered a slight exclamation—and instantly received a blow on the head that knocked me flat upon the ground!

Everything was swimming around me, but I realized that some one—Chunda Lal, probably—had been hiding in the very passage which I had entered. I heard again that uncanny wailing, close beside me. Vaguely I discerned an incredible figure, like that of a tall, cowed monk, towering over me.

I struggled to retain consciousness. There was a rush of feet, and I heard the throb of a motor. It stimulated me, that sound! I must get to the telephone and cause the yellow car to be intercepted.

I staggered to my feet and groped my way along the hedge to a point where I had observed a tree by means of which one might climb over. I was as dizzy as a drunken man, but I half climbed and half fell over onto the lawn.

The windows were open, and I rushed into Dr. Stuart's study. Pah, it was full of fumes! I looked around me. *Mon Dieu*, I staggered; for I knew that in this fume-laden room a thing more strange and

horrible than anything within my experience had taken place that night.

XXI

THE assistant commissioner lighted a cigarette.

"It would appear, then," he said, "that while some minor difficulties have been smoothed away, we remain face to face with the major problem—who is the Scorpion, and to what end are his activities directed?"

Gaston Max shrugged his shoulders and smiled at Dr. Stuart.

"Let us see," he suggested, "what we really know about this Scorpion. Let us make a brief survey of our position in the matter. Let us take first what we have learned of him—if it is a 'him' with whom we have to deal—from the strange experiences of Dr. Stuart. Without attaching too much importance to that episode five years ago on the Wu-men Bridge in China, we should remember, I think, that for any man to be known—and feared, it would appear—as the Scorpion, is remarkable. Very well. Perhaps the one we seek is the man of the Wu-men Bridge; perhaps he is not. We will talk about this again presently.

"We come to the arrival on the scene of Zâra el Khalâ, also called Mlle. Dorian. She comes because of the story I told to the scarred man from Paris. She comes to get hold of that dangerous information which is to be sent to Scotland Yard. She comes, in a word, from the Scorpion.

"We have two links binding the unfortunate fellow with the scar to the Scorpion—first, his intimacy with Miguel and the others with whom the Scorpion communicated by telephone; second, his possession of the golden ornament which lies there upon the table, and which I took from his pocket.

"What can we gather from the statement made to Dr. Stuart by Mlle. Dorian? Let us study this point for a moment.

"In the first place, we can only accept her words with a certain skepticism. Her story may be nothing but a fabrication. However, it is interesting, because she claims to be the unwilling servant of a dreaded master. She lays stress upon the fact that she is an Oriental and does not enjoy the same freedom as a European woman. That is possible, up to a point. On the other hand, she seems to enjoy not only freedom but every luxury. Therefore

it may equally well be a lie. Some slight color is lent to her story by the extraordinary mode of life that she followed in Paris. In the midst of liberty and Bohemianism she remained as secluded as an odalisk in some garden of Stamboul, whether by her own will or by will of another we do not know. One little point her existence seems to emphasize—that we are dealing with Orientals; for Zâra el Khalâ is partly of Eastern blood, and her follower, Chunda Lal, is a Hindu. *Eh bien!*

"Consider the cowed man whose shadow Dr. Stuart has seen on two occasions—once behind the curtain of his window, and once cast by the moonlight across the lawn of his house. The man himself he has never seen. Now this hooded man cannot have been Le Balafre, for the scarred man was already dead at the time of his first appearance. He may be the Scorpion."

Max paused impressively, looking around at those in the commissioner's room.

"For a moment I return to the man of the Wu-men Bridge. The man of the Wu-men Bridge was veiled, and this one is hooded. The man of the Wu-men Bridge was known as the Scorpion, and this one also is associated with a scorpion. We will return yet again to this point in a moment.

"Is there anything else that we may learn from the experiences of Dr. Stuart? Yes! We learn that the Scorpion suddenly decides that Dr. Stuart is dangerous, either because of his special knowledge—which would be interesting—or because the Scorpion believes that he has become acquainted with the contents of the sealed envelope—which is not so interesting, although equally dangerous for Dr. Stuart. The Scorpion acts. He pays a second visit, again accompanied by Chunda Lal. The Hindu seems to be a kind of watch-dog, who not only guards the person of Zâra el Khalâ, but who also howls when danger threatens the cowed man.

"And what is the weapon which the cowed man, who may be the Scorpion, uses to remove Dr. Stuart? It is a frightful weapon, my friends; it is a novel and a deadly weapon. It is a weapon of which science knows little or nothing—a blue ray of the color produced by a mercury-vapor lamp, according to Dr. Stuart, who has seen it, and producing an odor like that of a blast-furnace, according to myself, who smelled it! It is also possible that this odor might have been caused by the fusing

of the telephone; for the blue ray seems to destroy such things as telephones as easily as it destroys wood and paper. There is even a large round hole burned through the clay at the back of the study grate and through the brick wall behind it! The Scorpion is a scientist, and he is also the greatest menace to the world that we have ever been called upon to deal with. You agree with me?"

Inspector Dunbar heaved a great sigh. Stuart silently accepted a cigarette from the assistant commissioner's box. The assistant commissioner spoke slowly and deliberately.

"I entirely agree with you, M. Max. Respecting this ray, as well as one or two other details, I have made a short note, which we will discuss when you have completed your admirably lucid survey of the case."

Gaston Max bowed and resumed.

"These are the things, then, that we learn from the terrible experiences of Dr. Stuart. Placing these experiences side by side with my own, in Paris and in London—which we have already discussed in detail—we find that we have to deal with some mysterious organization. Its object is unknown, but we have ascertained that it comprises among its members both Europeans—Le Balafré was a Frenchman, I believe—cross-breeds such as Miguel and Zâra el Khalâ"—Stuart winced—"one Algerian, and a Hindu. It is, then, an organization having ramifications throughout Europe, the East, and where not?"

Max took up from the commissioner's table the golden scorpion and the severed fragment of tail.

"This little image or emblem," he continued, "is now definitely recognized by Dr. Stuart, who is familiar with the work of Oriental goldsmiths, to be of Chinese craftsmanship."

"It may possibly be Tibetan," interrupted Stuart; "but it comes to the same thing."

"Very well!" continued Max. "It is Chinese. We hope very shortly to identify a house situated somewhere within this red-ink circle"—he placed his finger on a map of London which lay open on the table—"which I know to be used as a meeting-place by members of this mysterious group. That circle, my friends, surrounds what is known as Chinatown. For the third time I return to the man of the Wu-men Bridge; for the man of the Wu-men Bridge was ap-

parently a *Chinaman*! Do I make myself clear?"

"Remarkably so," declared the assistant commissioner, taking a fresh cigarette. "Pray continue, M. Max."

"I will do so. One of my most important investigations, in which I had the honor and pleasure to be associated with Inspector Dunbar, led to the discovery of a dangerous group controlled by a certain Mr. King—"

"Ah!" cried Dunbar, his tawny eyes sparkling with excitement. "I was waiting for that!"

"I knew you would be waiting for it, inspector. Your powers of deductive reasoning are earning my respect more and more. You recall that singular case? The elaborate network extending from London to Buenos Aires, from Peking to Petrograd? Ah, a wonderful system! It was an opium syndicate, you understand," Max added, turning again to the assistant commissioner.

"I recall the case," replied the commissioner, "although I did not hold my present appointment at the time. I believe there were unsatisfactory features?"

"There were," agreed Max. "We never solved the mystery of the identity of Mr. King, and although we succeeded in destroying the enterprise, I have since thought that we acted with undue precipitation."

"Yes," said Dunbar rapidly; "but there was that poor girl to be rescued, you will remember? We couldn't waste time."

"I agree entirely, inspector. Our hands were forced. Yet I repeat that I have since thought we acted with undue precipitation. I will tell you why. Do you recall the loss—not explained to this day—of the plans of the Haley torpedo?"

"Perfectly," replied the commissioner; and Dunbar also nodded affirmatively.

"Very well! A similar national loss was sustained about the same time by my own government. I am not at liberty to divulge its exact nature, and the loss never became known to the public. But the only member of the French chamber who had seen this document to which I refer was a certain M. Blank, shall we say? I believe also that I am correct in stating that the late Sir Brian Malpas was a member of the British cabinet at the time when the Haley plans were lost?"

"That is correct," said the assistant commissioner; "but surely the honor of the late Sir Brian was above suspicion?"

"Quite," agreed Max; "so also was that

of M. Blank. But my point is this—both M. Blank and the late Sir Brian were clients of the opium syndicate."

Dunbar nodded again eagerly.

"Hard work I had to hush it up," he said. "It would have finished his political career!"

The assistant commissioner looked politely puzzled.

"It was generally supposed that Sir Brian Malpas was addicted to drugs," he remarked. "I am not surprised to learn that he patronized this syndicate to which you refer; but—" He paused, smiling sardonically. "Ah!" he added. "I see! I see!"

"You perceive the drift of my argument?" cried Max. "You grasp what I mean when I say that we were too hasty? This syndicate existed for a more terrible purpose than the promulgating of a Chinese vice. It had in its clutches men entrusted with national secrets, men of undoubted ability, but slaves of a horrible drug. Under the influence of that drug, my friends, how many of those secrets may they not have divulged?"

His words were received in profound silence.

"What became of those stolen plans?" he continued, speaking now in a very low voice. "In the stress of recent years has the Haley torpedo made its appearance, so that we might learn to which government the plans were taken? No! The same mystery surrounds the fate of the information filched from the drugged brain of M. Blank. In a word"—he raised a finger dramatically—"some one is hoarding up those instruments of destruction! Who is it that collects such things, and for what purpose does he collect them?"

There was another tense moment of silence.

"Let us have your own theory, M. Max," said the assistant commissioner.

Gaston Max shrugged his shoulders.

"It is not worthy of the name of a theory," he replied, "the surmise which I have made; but recently I found myself considering the fact that the Scorpion might just conceivably be a Chinaman. Now Mr. King, we believe, was a Chinaman, and Mr. King, as I am now convinced, operated not for a personal object, but for some deeper political purpose. He stole the brains of genius and accumulated that which he had stolen. The Scorpion de-

stroys genius. Is it not possible that these contrary operations may be part of a common plan?"

XXII

"You are not by any chance," suggested Stuart, smiling slightly, "hinting at that defunct bogey the 'yellow peril'?"

"Ah!" cried Max. "Certainly I am not! Do not misunderstand me. This group with which we are dealing is shown to be not of a national but of an international character. The same was the case with the organization of Mr. King; but a Chinaman directed the one, and I begin to suspect that a Chinaman directs the other. No, I speak of no ridiculous yellow peril, my friends. John Chinaman, as I have known him, is no menace to the world; but can you not imagine"—he dropped his voice again in that impressive way which was yet so truly Gallic—"can you not imagine an Oriental society which, like a great, a formidable serpent, might lie hidden somewhere below that deceptive jungle of the East? These are troubled times. It is a wise state to-day that knows its own leaders and understands whither they are leading it. Can you not imagine a dreadful, sudden menace, not of men and guns, but of *brains* and *capital*?"

"You mean," said Dunbar slowly, "that the Scorpion may be getting people out of the way who might interfere with this rising, or invasion, or whatever it is?"

"Just as Mr. King accumulated material for it," interjected the assistant commissioner. "It is a bold conception, M. Max. It raises the case out of the ordinary category and invests it with enormous international importance."

All were silent for a time. Stuart, Dunbar, and the commissioner watched the famous Frenchman as he sat there, arrayed in the latest fashion of Savile Row, yet Gallic to his finger-tips and in every gesture. It was almost impossible at times to credit the fact that a Parisian was speaking, for the English of Gaston Max was flawless, although he spoke with a slight American accent. Then, suddenly, a gesture, an expletive, would betray the Frenchman.

Such betrayals never escaped him when, in one of his inimitable disguises, he penetrated to the purlieus of Whitechapel, to the dens of Limehouse. Then he was the perfect Hooligan, as, mingling with the dan-

gerous thieves of Paris, he was the perfect apache. It was an innate gift of mimicry which had made him the greatest investigator of his day. He could have studied Chinese social life for six months, and could thereupon have become a mandarin whom his own servants would never have suspected to be a "foreign barbarian." It was pure genius, as opposed to the brilliant efficiency of Dunbar.

In the heart of the latter, as he studied Gaston Max and realized the gulf that separated them, there was nothing but generous admiration of a master. Yet Dunbar was no novice, for by a fine process of deductive reasoning he had come to the conclusion, as has already appeared, that Gaston Max had been masquerading as a cabman, and that the sealed letter left with Dr. Stuart had been left as a lure. By one of those tricks of fate which sometimes perfect the plans of men, but more often destroy them, the body of Le Balafré had been so disfigured while it was buffeted about in the Thames that it was utterly unrecognizable and indescribable; but even the disk had not deceived Dunbar. He had seen in it another ruse of his brilliant confrère, and his orders to the keeper of the mortuary to admit no one without a written permit had been dictated by the conviction that Max wished the body to be mistaken for his own.

Gaston Max, in turn, had immediately recognized an able colleague in Inspector Dunbar, even as Mrs. McGregor had recognized "a grand figure of a man."

The assistant commissioner broke the silence.

"There have been other cases," he said reflectively, "now that one considers the matter, which seem to point to the existence of such a group or society as you indicate, M. Max. There was one with which, if I remember rightly, Inspector"—he turned his dark eyes toward Dunbar—"Inspector Weymouth, late of this branch, was associated?"

"Quite right, sir. It was his big case, and it got him a fine billet as superintendent in Cairo, if you remember."

"Yes," mused the assistant commissioner. "He transferred to Egypt—a very good appointment, as you say. That, again, was before my term of office; but there were several very ghastly crimes connected with the case, and it was more or less definitely established, I believe, that

some extensive secret society did actually exist throughout the East, governed, I fancy, by a Chinaman."

"And from China," added Dunbar.

"Yes, yes—from China, as you say, inspector." He turned to Gaston Max. "Can it really be, M. Max, that we have to deal with an outcropping of some deep-seated evil which resides in the Far East? Are all these cases, not the work of individual criminals, but manifestations of a more sinister, a darker force?"

Gaston Max met his glance, and Max's mouth grew very grim.

"I honestly believe so," he answered. "I have believed it for nearly two years—ever since the grand duke died. And now I remember that you said you had made a note, the nature of which you would communicate."

"Yes," replied the assistant commissioner; "a small point, but one which may be worthy of attention. This ray, Dr. Stuart, which played such havoc in your study—do you know of anything approaching it in recent scientific devices?"

"Well," said Stuart, "it may be no more than a development of one of several systems, notably that of the late Henrik Ericksen, upon which he was at work at the time of his death."

"Exactly!" The assistant commissioner smiled in his most Mephistophelian manner. "Of the late Henrik Ericksen, as you say."

He said no more for a moment, but sat smoking and looking from face to face.

"That is the subject of my note, gentlemen," he added when he spoke again. "The other details are of no immediate importance."

"*Nom d'un petit bonhomme!*" whispered Gaston Max. "I see! You think that Ericksen had completed his experiments before he died, but that he never lived to give them to the world?"

The assistant commissioner waved one hand in the air, so that the discoloration of his first and second fingers was noticeable.

"It is for you to ascertain these points, M. Max," he said. "I only suggest; but I begin to share your belief that a series of daring and unusual assassinations has been taking place under the eyes of the police authorities of Europe. Poison must have been used—an unknown poison, perhaps. Within a few days we shall probably be empowered to exhume the body of the late

Sir Frank Narcombe. His case puzzles me hopelessly. What obstacle did a surgeon offer to this hypothetical Eastern movement? On the other hand, what can have been filched from him before his death? The death of an inventor, a statesman, a soldier, can be variously explained by your hypothesis, M. Max, but what of the death of a surgeon?"

Gaston Max shrugged, and his mobile mouth softened in a quaint smile.

"We have learned a little," he said, "and guessed a lot. Let us hope to guess more—and learn everything!"

"May I suggest," added Dunbar, "that we hear Sowerby's report, sir?"

"Certainly," agreed the assistant commissioner. "Call Sergeant Sowerby."

A moment later Sergeant Sowerby entered, his face very red and his hair bristling more persistently than usual.

"Anything to report, Sowerby?" asked Dunbar.

"Yes, inspector," replied Sowerby in his police-court manner. "With your permission, sir," he added, turning to face the assistant commissioner.

He took out a note-book, which appeared to be the twin of Dunbar's, and consulted it, assuming an expression of profound reflection.

"In the first place, sir," he began, never raising his eyes from the page, "I have traced the cab sold on the hire-purchase system to a certain Charles Mallet—"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Max breezily. "He calls me a hammer! It is not Mallet, Sergeant Sowerby—you have got too many 'l's' in that name. It is Malet, pronounced as if it came from the Malay States!"

"Oh!" commented Sowerby, glancing up. "Indeed! Very good, sir. The owner claims the balance of the purchase-money."

Every one laughed at that, even the satanic assistant commissioner.

"Pay your debts, M. Max," he said. "You will bring the Service de Sûreté into bad repute! Carry on, sergeant."

"This cab—" continued Sowerby, when Dunbar interrupted him.

"Cut out the part about the cab, Sowerby," he said. "We've found that out from M. Max. Have you anything to report about the yellow car?"

"Yes," replied Sowerby, unperturbed, and turning over to the next page. "It was hired from Messrs. Wickers' garage, at

Canning Town, by the week. The lady who hired it was a Miss Dorian, a French lady. She gave no reference, except that of the Savoy Hotel, where she was stopping. She paid a big deposit, and had her own chauffeur, a colored man of some kind."

"Is it still in use by her?" snapped Dunbar eagerly.

"No, inspector. She claimed her deposit this morning, and said she was leaving London."

"The check?" cried Dunbar.

"Was cashed half an hour later."

"At what bank?"

"London County and Birmingham, Canning Town. Her own account at a Strand bank was closed yesterday. The details all concern milliners, jewelers, hotels, and so forth. There's nothing there. I've been to the Savoy, of course."

"Yes!"

"A lady named Dorian has had rooms there for six weeks. She dined there on several occasions, but was more often away than in the hotel."

"Visitors?"

"Never had any."

"She used to dine alone, then?"

"Always."

"In the public dining-room?"

"No—in her own room."

"*Morbleu!*" muttered Max. "It is she, beyond doubt. I recognize her sociable habits!"

"Has she left now?" asked Dunbar.

"She left a week ago."

Sowerby closed his note-book and returned it to his pocket.

"Is that all you have to report, sergeant?" asked the assistant commissioner.

"That's all, sir."

"Very good!"

Sergeant Sowerby retired.

"Now, sir," said Dunbar, "I've got Inspector Kelly here. He looks after the Chinese quarter. Shall I call him?"

"Yes, inspector."

Presently there entered a burly Irishman, bluff and good-humored, a very typical example of the intelligent superior police officer, looking keenly around him.

"Ah, inspector!" the assistant commissioner greeted him. "We want your assistance in a little matter concerning the Chinese residential quarter. You know this district?"

"Certainly, sir. I know it very well."

"On this map"—the assistant commis-

sioner laid a discolored forefinger upon the map of London—"you will perceive that we have drawn a circle."

Inspector Kelly bent over the table.

"Yes, sir."

"Within that circle, which is no larger in circumference than a shilling, as you observe, lies a house used by a certain group of people. It has been suggested to me that these people may be Chinese, or associates of Chinese."

"Well, sir," said Inspector Kelly, smiling broadly, "considering the patch inside the circle, I think it more than likely. Seventy-five per cent, or it may be eighty per cent, of the rooms and cellars and attics in those three streets are occupied by Chinese."

"For your guidance, inspector, we believe these people to be a dangerous gang of international criminals. Do you know of any particular house, or houses, likely to be used as a meeting-place by such a gang?"

Inspector Kelly scratched his close-cropped head.

"A woman was murdered just there, sir, about a year ago," he said, taking up a pen from the table and touching a point near the corner of Three Colt Street. "We traced the man—a Chinese sailor—to a house just about here." Again he touched the map. "It's a sort of little junk-shop with a ramshackle house attached, all cellars and rabbit-hutches, as you might say, overhanging a disused channel which is filled at high tide. Opium is to be had there, and card-playing goes on, and I won't swear that you couldn't get liquor; but it's comparatively well conducted, as such dives go."

"Why is it not closed?" inquired the assistant commissioner, seizing an opportunity to air his departmental ignorance.

"Well, sir," replied Inspector Kelly, his eyes twinkling, "if we shut up all these places we should never know where to look for some of our regular customers. As I mentioned, we found the wanted Chinaman, three parts drunk, in one of the rooms there."

"It's a sort of lodging-house, then?"

"Exactly. There's a moderately big room just behind the shop, principally used by opium-smokers, and a whole nest of smaller rooms above and below. Mind you, sir, I don't say this is the place you're looking for, but it's the most likely inside your circle."

"Who is the proprietor?"

"A retired Chinese sailor called Ah Fang Fu, but better known as Pidgin. His establishment is called locally the Pidgin House."

"Ah!" The commissioner lighted a cigarette. "And you know of no other house which might be selected for such a purpose as I have mentioned?"

"I can't say I do, sir. I know about all the business affairs of that neighborhood, and none of the houses inside your circle have changed hands during the past twelve months. Between ourselves, sir, nearly all the property in the district belongs to Ah Fang Fu, and he knows anything that goes on in Chinatown."

"Ah, I see! Then in any event he is the man we want to watch?"

"Well, sir, you ought to keep an eye on his visitors, I should say."

"I am obliged to you, inspector," said the courteous assistant commissioner, "for your very exact information. If necessary, I shall communicate with you again. Good day!"

"Good day, sir," replied the inspector.

"Good day, gentlemen."

He went out.

Gaston Max, who had diplomatically remained in the background throughout this interview, now spoke.

"*Pardieu*, but I have been thinking!" he said. "Although the Scorpion, as I hope, believes that that troublesome Charles Malet is dead, he may also wonder if Scotland Yard has secured from Dr. Stuart's fire any fragments of the information sealed in the envelope. What does it mean, this releasing the yellow car, closing the bank account, and departing from the Savoy?"

"It means flight!" cried Dunbar, jumping violently to his feet. "By gad, sir"—he turned to the assistant commissioner—"the birds may have flown already!"

The assistant commissioner leaned back in his chair.

"I have sufficient confidence in M. Max," he said, "to believe that, having taken the responsibility of permitting this dangerous group to learn that they were under surveillance, he has good reason to suppose that they have not slipped through our fingers."

Gaston Max bowed.

"It is true," he replied, and from his pocket he took a slip of flimsy paper.

"This code message reached me as I was about to leave my hotel. The quadroom, Miguel, left Paris last night and arrived in London this morning."

"He was followed?" cried Dunbar.

"But certainly. He was followed to Limehouse, and he was definitely seen to enter the establishment described to us by Inspector Kelly."

"Gad!" said Dunbar. "Then *some one* is still there!"

"Some one, as you say, is still there," replied Max; "but everything points to the imminent departure of this *some one*. Will you see to it, inspector, that not a rat—*pardieu*, not a little mouse—is allowed to slip out of our red circle to-day? For to-night we shall pay a friendly visit to the house of Ah Fang Fu, and I should wish all the company to be present."

XXIII

STUART returned to his house in a troubled frame of mind. He had refrained so long from betraying the circumstances of his last meeting with Mlle. Dorian to the police authorities that this meeting now constituted a sort of guilty secret, a link binding him to the beautiful accomplice of the Scorpion—to the dark-eyed servant of the uncanny cowed thing which had sought his life by strange means. He hugged the secret to his breast, and the pain of it afforded him a kind of savage joy.

In his study he found a post-office workman engaged in fitting a new telephone. As Stuart entered, the man turned.

"Good afternoon, sir," he said, taking up the destroyed instrument from the litter of wire, screws, pincers, and screw-drivers lying upon the table. "If it's not a rude question, how on earth did *this* happen?"

Stuart laughed uneasily.

"It got mixed up with an experiment I was conducting," he replied evasively.

The man inspected the headless trunk of the instrument.

"It seems to be fused, as if the top of it had been in a furnace," he continued. "Experiments of that sort are a bit dangerous outside a proper laboratory, I should think."

"They are," agreed Stuart. "But I have no facilities here, you see, and I was—er—compelled to attempt the experiment. I don't intend to repeat it."

"That's lucky," murmured the man, dropping the instrument into a carpetbag.

"If you do, it will cost you a tidy penny for telephones!"

Walking out toward the dispensary, Stuart met Mrs. McGregor.

"A post-office messenger brought this letter for you, Mr. Keppel, just the now," the old housekeeper said, handing Stuart a sealed envelope.

He took it from her hand and turned quickly away. He felt that he had changed color; for the envelope was addressed in the handwriting of Mlle. Dorian!

"Thank you, Mrs. McGregor," he said, and turned into the dining-room.

Mrs. McGregor proceeded about her household duties. As her footsteps receded, Stuart feverishly tore open the envelope. That elusive scent of jasmine crept to his nostrils. In the envelope was a sheet of thick note-paper, with the top cut off, evidently in order to remove a printed address; and upon this the following singular message was written:

Before I go away there is something I want to say to you. You do not trust me. It is not wonderful that you do not. But I swear that I only want to save you from a *great* danger. If you will promise not to tell the police anything of it, I will meet you at six o'clock by the book-stall at Victoria Station—on the Brighton side. If you agree, you will wear something white in your buttonhole. If not, you cannot find me there. Nobody ever sees me again.

There was no signature, but no signature was necessary.

Stuart laid the letter on the table and began to pace up and down the room. His heart was beating ridiculously. His self-contempt was profound; but he could not mistake his sentiments.

His duty was plain enough; but he had failed in it once, and, even as he strode up and down the room, already he knew that he must fail again. He knew that, rightly or wrongly, he was incapable of placing this note in the hands of the police, and he knew that he would be at Victoria Station at six o'clock!

He would never have believed himself capable of becoming accessory to a series of crimes—for that is what his conduct amounted to. He had thought that sentiment no longer held any meaning for him; yet the only excuse that he could find wherewith to solace himself was that this girl had endeavored to save him from assassination. Weighed against the undoubted fact that she was a member of a

dangerous criminal group, what was it worth?

If the supposition of Gaston Max was correct, the Scorpion had at least six cruel murders to his credit, in addition to the attempt upon Stuart's life and that of Le Balafre upon the life of M. Max. It was an accomplice of that nameless horror vaguely known as the Scorpion with whom, at six o'clock, he had a tryst, whom he was protecting from justice, by the suppression of whose messages to himself he was adding difficulties to the already difficult task of the authorities!

Up and down he paced restlessly, every now and again glancing at a clock upon the mantelpiece. He told himself that his behavior was contemptible. Yet, at a quarter to six, he went out—and, seeing a little cluster of daisies growing among the grass bordering the path, he plucked one and set it in his buttonhole.

A few minutes before the hour he entered the station and glanced sharply around at the many groups scattered about in the neighborhood of the book-stall. There was no sign of Mlle. Dorian. He walked around the booking-office without seeing her, and glanced into the waiting-room. Then, looking up at the station clock, he saw that the hour had come.

As he stood there, staring upward, he felt a timid touch upon his shoulder. He turned—and she was standing by his side!

She was Parisian from head to foot, simply but perfectly gowned. A veil hung from her hat, half concealing her face, but it could not hide her wonderful eyes or disguise the delightful curves of her red lips.

Stuart automatically raised his hat. Even as he did so, he wondered what he would have said and done had he suddenly found Gaston Max standing at his elbow! He laughed shortly.

"You are angry with me," said Mlle. Dorian. Stuart thought that her quaint accent was adorable. "Or are you angry with yourself for seeing me?"

"I am angry with myself," he replied, "for being so weak."

"Is it so weak," she said rather tremulously, "not to judge a woman by what she seems to be, and not to condemn her before you hear what she has to say? If that is weak, I am glad! I think it is how a man should be."

Her trembling voice and her appealing eyes completed the spell, and Stuart re-

signed himself without another struggle to this insane infatuation.

"We cannot very well talk here," he said. "Suppose we go into the hotel and have late tea, Mlle. Dorian?"

"Yes. Very well. But please do not call me that. It is not my name."

"Zâra el Khalâ, then," Stuart was on the point of saying, but he checked himself in the nick of time. He might hold communication with the enemy, but at least he would give away no information.

"I am called Miska," she added. "Will you please call me Miska?"

"Of course, if you wish," said Stuart.

Looking down at her as she walked by his side, he wondered what he would do when he had to stand up in court, look at Miska in the felon's dock, and speak words which would help to condemn her—perhaps to death, at least to penal servitude! He shuddered.

"Have I said something that displeases you?" she asked, resting a little white-gloved hand on his arm. "I am sorry!"

"No, no," he assured her. "But I was thinking—I cannot help thinking—"

"How wicked I am?" she whispered.

"How lovely you are," he said hotly, "and how maddening it is to remember that you are an accomplice of criminals!"

"Oh!" she said, and removed her hand, but not before he had felt how it trembled. They were about to enter the tea-room when she added: "Please don't say that until I have told you why I do what I do."

Obedying a sudden impulse, he took her hand and drew it close under his arm.

"No," he said, "I won't. I was a brute, Miska! Miska means 'musk,' does it not?"

"Yes." She glanced up at him timidly. "Do you think it a pretty name?"

"Very!" he said, laughing.

Underlying the Western veneer was the fascinating naïveté of the Eastern woman. Miska also had all the suave grace which belongs to the women of the Orient, so that many admiring glances followed her charming figure as she crossed the room to a vacant table.

XXIV

"Now, what do you want to tell me?" said Stuart, when he had given an order to the waiter. "Whatever it may be, I am all anxiety to hear it. I promise that I will act upon anything you may tell me only in

the event of my life, or that of another, being palpably endangered by my silence."

"Very well. I want to tell you," replied Miska, "why I stay with Fo Hi."

"Who is Fo Hi?"

"I do not know!"

"What?" said Stuart. "I am afraid I don't understand you."

"If I speak in French, will you be able to follow what I say?"

"Certainly. Are you more at ease with French?"

"Yes," replied Miska, beginning to speak in the latter language. "My mother was French, you see, and although I can speak in English fairly well I cannot yet *think* in English. Do you understand what I mean?"

"Perfectly; so perhaps you will now explain to whom you refer when you speak of Fo Hi."

Miska glanced apprehensively around her, bending further forward over the table.

"Let me tell you from the beginning," she said in a low voice, "and then you will understand. It must not take me long. You see me as I am to-day because of a dreadful misfortune that befell me when I was fifteen years old. My father was vali of Aleppo, and my mother, his third wife, was a Frenchwoman, a member of a theatrical company which had come to Cairo, where he had first seen her. She must have loved him, for she gave up the world, embraced Islam, and entered his harem in the great house on the outskirts of Aleppo. Perhaps it was because he, too, was half French that they were mutually attracted. My father's mother was a Frenchwoman also, you understand.

"Until I was fifteen years of age I never left the harem, but my mother taught me French and also a little English; and she prevailed upon my father not to give me in marriage so early as is usual in the East. She taught me to understand the ways of European women, and we used to have Paris journals and many books sent to us regularly. Then an awful pestilence visited Aleppo. People were dying in the mosques and in the streets, and my father decided to send my mother and myself and some others of the harem to his brother's house in Damascus.

"Perhaps you will think that such things do not happen in these days, and particularly to members of the household of a chief magistrate, but I can only tell you what is

true. On the second night of our journey a band of Arabs swept down upon the caravan, overpowered the guards, killing them all, and carried off everything of value which we had. Me, also, they carried off—me and one other, a little Syrian girl, my cousin. Oh"—she shuddered violently—"even now I can sometimes hear my mother's shrieks, and how her cries suddenly ceased!"

Stuart looked up with a start, to find a Swiss waiter placing tea upon the table. He felt like rubbing his eyes. He had been dragged rudely back from the Syrian desert to the prosaic realities of a London hotel.

"Perhaps," continued Miska, "you will think that we were ill-treated, but it was not so. No one molested us. We had every comfort that desert life can provide—servants to wait upon us, and plenty of good food. After several weeks' journeying we came to a large city, having many minarets and domes glimmering in the moonlight; for we entered at night. Indeed, we always traveled at night. At the time I had no idea of the name of the city, but I learned afterward that it was Mecca.

"As we proceeded through the streets, the Syrian girl and I peeped out through the little windows of the *shibriyeh*—which is a kind of tent on the back of a camel—in which we traveled, hoping to see some familiar face, or some one to whom we could appeal. But there seemed to be scarcely any one visible in the streets, although lights shone out from many windows, and the few men whom we saw seemed to be anxious to avoid us. In fact, several ran down side turnings as the camels approached them.

"We stopped before the gate of a large house, which was presently opened, and the camels entered the courtyard. We descended, and I saw that a number of small apartments surrounded the courtyard, in the manner of a caravansary. Then, suddenly I saw something else, and I knew why we had been treated with such consideration on the journey. I knew into what hands I had fallen. I knew that I was in the house of a *slave-dealer*!"

"Good Heavens!" muttered Stuart. "This is almost incredible!"

"I knew you would doubt what I had to tell you," declared Miska plaintively; "but I solemnly swear that it is the truth. Yes, I was in the house of a slave-dealer; and

on the very next day, because I was proficient in languages, in music, and in dancing, and also because—according to their Eastern ideas—I was pretty, the dealer, Mohammed Abd el Bâli, offered me for sale."

She stopped, lowering her eyes and flushing hotly.

"In a small room, which I can never forget," she continued with hesitancy, "I was offered the only indignity which I had been called upon to suffer since my abduction. I was *exhibited* to prospective purchasers."

As she spoke the words, Miska's eyes flashed passionately and her hand, which lay on the table, trembled. Stuart silently reached across and rested his own upon it.

"There were all kinds of girls in the adjoining rooms," Miska continued; "black and brown and white, and some of them were singing and some dancing, while others wept. Four different visitors inspected me critically, two of them being agents for royal harems, and the other two—how shall I say it?—wealthy connoisseurs. But the price asked by Mohammed Abd el Bâli was beyond the purses of all except one of the agents. He had indeed settled the bargain, when the singing and dancing and shouting—every sound, it seemed—ceased about me, and into the little room, in which I crouched among perfumed cushions at the feet of the two men, walked Fo Hi.

"Of course, I did not know at the time that this was his name; I only knew that a tall Chinaman had entered the room, and that his face was entirely covered by a green veil."

Stuart started, but did not interrupt Miska's story.

"This veil gave him in some way a frightfully malign and repellent appearance. As he stood in the doorway, I seemed to feel his gaze passing over me like a flame, although, of course, I could not see his eyes. Much as his presence affected me, its effect upon the slave-dealer and my purchaser was extraordinary. They seemed to be stricken dumb. Suddenly the Chinaman spoke in perfect Arabic.

"Her price?" he said.

"Mohammed Abd el Bâli, standing trembling before him, replied:

"Miska is already sold, lord, but—"

"Her price?" repeated the Chinaman in the same hard, metallic voice and without the slightest change of intonation.

"The agent who had brought me now said, his voice shaking so that the words were barely audible:

"I give her up, Mohammed—I give her up. Who am I to dispute with the Mandarin Fo Hi?"

"Performing an abject obeisance, he backed out of the room. At the same moment Mohammed, whose knees were trembling so that they seemed no longer capable of supporting him, addressed the green-veiled Chinaman.

"Accept the maiden as an unworthy gift," he began.

"Her price?" repeated Fo Hi.

"Mohammed, whose teeth had begun to chatter, asked him twice as much as he had agreed to accept from the other. Fo Hi clapped his hands, and a fierce-eyed Hindu entered the room. Fo Hi addressed him in a language which I did not understand, although I have learned since that it was Hindustani; and the Indian, from a purse which he carried, counted out the amount demanded by the dealer and placed the money upon a little inlaid table which stood in the room. Fo Hi gave him some brief order, turned, and walked out of the room. I did not see my purchaser again for four years—that is to say, until my nineteenth birthday."

"I know that you are wondering about many things, and I will try to make some of them clear to you. You are wondering, no doubt, how such a trade as I have described is carried on in the East to-day, almost under the eyes of European governments. Now I shall surprise you. When I was taken from the house of the slave-dealer, in charge of Chunda Lal—that was the name of the Hindu—do you know where I was carried to? I will tell you—to *Cairo!*"

"Cairo!" cried Stuart; then, perceiving that he had attracted attention by speaking so loudly, he lowered his voice. "Do you mean to tell me that you were taken as a *slave* to Cairo?"

Miska smiled—and her smile was the taunting smile of the East, which is at once a caress and an invitation.

"You think, no doubt, that there are no slaves in Cairo," she said. "So do most people, and so did I—once. I learned better. There are palaces in Cairo, I assure you, in which there are many slaves. I myself lived in such a palace for four years, and I was not the only slave there. What

do British or French residents know of the inner domestic life of their Oriental neighbors? Are they ever admitted to the harem? And the slaves—are they ever allowed outside the walls of the palace? Sometimes, yes, but never alone.

"By slow stages, following the ancient caravan routes, and accompanied by an extensive retinue of servants in charge of Chunda Lal, we came to Cairo. Approaching the city from the northeast, and entering at night by the Bâb en Nasr, I was taken to the old palace which was to be my prison for four years. How I passed those four years has no bearing upon the matters which I have to tell you, but I lived the useless, luxurious life of an Arabian princess, my lightest wish anticipated and gratified. Nothing was denied me except freedom. Then, one day—it was actually my nineteenth birthday—Chunda Lal presented himself and told me that I was to have an interview with Fo Hi. Hearing those words, I nearly swooned, for a hundred times during the years of my strange, luxurious captivity I had awakened trembling in the night, thinking that the figure of the awful veiled Chinaman had entered the room.

"You must understand that having spent my childhood in a harem, the mode of life which I was compelled to follow in Cairo was not so insufferable as it must have been for a European woman. Neither was my captivity made unduly irksome. I often drove through the European quarters, always accompanied by Chunda Lal, and closely veiled, and I regularly went shopping in the bazaars—but never alone. The death of my mother, and later that of my father, of which Chunda Lal had told me, were griefs that time had dulled; but the horror of Fo Hi was one that lived with me day and night.

"To a wing of the palace which was kept closely locked, and which I had never seen opened, I was conducted by Chunda Lal. There, in a room of a kind with which I have since become painfully familiar, a room which was part library and part office, part museum and part laboratory, I found the veiled man seated at a great table littered with papers. As I stood trembling before him, he raised a long, yellow hand and waved to Chunda Lal to depart. When the Hindu obeyed, and I heard the door close, I could scarcely repress a shriek of terror.

"For what seemed an interminable time Fo Hi sat watching me. I dared not look at him, but again I *felt* his gaze passing over me like a flame. Then he began to speak in French, which he spoke without a trace of accent. He told me briefly that my life of idleness had ended, and that a new career of activity in many parts of the world was about to commence. His manner was quite unemotional, neither harsh nor kindly, and his metallic voice conveyed no more than the bare meaning of the words which he uttered. When he ceased speaking, he struck a gong that hung from a corner of the huge table, and Chunda Lal entered. Fo Hi addressed a brief order to him in Hindustani, and a few moments later a second Chinaman walked slowly into the room."

Miska paused, as if to collect her ideas, but continued almost immediately:

"He wore a plain yellow robe, and had a little black cap on his head. His face, his wonderful, evil face, I can never forget, and his eyes—I fear you will think I exaggerate, but his eyes were as green as emeralds! He fixed them upon me.

"‘This,’ said Fo Hi, ‘is Miska.’

"The other Chinaman continued to regard me with those dreadful eyes.

"‘You have chosen well,’ he said, turned, and slowly went out again.

"I thank God that I have never seen him since, for his dreadful face haunted my dreams for long afterward; but I have heard of him, and I know that next to Fo Hi he is the most dangerous being in the known world. He has invented horrible things—poisons and instruments, which I cannot describe because I have never seen them; but I have seen some of their effects."

She paused, overcome with the horror of her memories.

"What is the name of this other man?" asked Stuart eagerly.

"Oh, do not ask me questions, please!" Miska pleaded. "I will tell you all I can, all I dare. What I do not tell you I cannot tell you—and this is one of the things I dare not tell. He is a Chinese scientist. I have heard that he is the greatest genius in the whole world, but I can say no more—yet."

"Is he still alive, this man?"

"I do not know that. If he is alive, he is in China, at some secret palace in the province of Honan which is the headquar-

ters of what is called the Sublime Order. I have never been there, but there are European men and women there, as well as Orientals."

"What? Europeans in the employ of these fiends?"

"It is useless to ask me. Indeed I would tell you if I could, but I cannot. Let me go on from the time when I saw Fo Hi in Cairo. He told me that I was a member of an organization dating back to remote antiquity, which was destined to rule all the races of mankind—the Celestial Age, he called their coming triumph. Something which they had lacked in order to achieve success had been supplied by the dreadful man who had entered the room and expressed his approval of me. For many years they had been secretly at work in Europe, as well as in the East. I understood that they had acquired a quantity of valuable information of some kind by means of a system of opium-houses situated in the principal capitals of the world and directed by Fo Hi and a number of Chinese assistants. Fo Hi had remained in China most of the time, but had paid occasional visits to Europe. The other man—the monster with the black skull-cap—had been responsible for the conduct of the European enterprises."

"Throughout this interview," interrupted Stuart, forgetful of the fact that Miska had warned him of the futility of asking questions, "and during others which you must have had with Fo Hi, did you never obtain a glimpse of his face?"

"Never! I do not think that any one has ever seen his face. I know that his eyes are of a brilliant and unnatural yellow color, but otherwise I should not know him if I saw him unveiled to-morrow—except," she added, "by a sense of loathing which his presence inspires in me. But I must hurry. If you interrupt me, I shall not have time."

"From that day in Cairo—oh, how can I tell you?—I began the life of an adventurer. I do not deny it. I came here to confess it to you. I went to New York, to London, to Paris, to Petrograd; I went all over the world. I had beautiful dresses, jewels, admiration—all that women live for; and in the midst of it all, mine was the life of the cloister; no nun could be more secluded. I see the question in your eyes—why did I do it? Why did I lure men into the clutches of Fo Hi? For this

is what I did; and when I failed I was punished."

Stuart shrank from her.

"You confess," he said hoarsely, "that you knowingly lured men to death?"

"Ah, no!" she whispered, looking about her fearfully. "Never, never! I swear it—never!"

"Then"—he stared at her blankly—"I do not understand you."

"I dare not make it clearer—now. I dare not—dare not! But *believe* me! Oh, please, please," she pleaded, her soft voice dropping to a whisper, "believe me! If you knew what I risked to tell you so much, you would be more merciful. A horror which cannot be described"—again she shuddered—"will fall upon me if *he* ever suspects. You think me young and full of life, with all the world before me. You do not know. I am, literally, *already dead*! Oh, I have followed a strange career. I have danced in a Paris theater, and I have sold flowers in Rome. I have had my box at the opera, and I have filled opium-pipes in a den in San Francisco; but never, never have I lured a man to his death. And through it all, from first to last, no man has so much as kissed the tips of my fingers."

"At a word, at a sign, I have been compelled to go from Monte Carlo to Buenos Aires; at another sign from there to Tokyo. Chunda Lal has guarded me as only the women of the East are guarded; yet, in his fierce way, he has always tried to befriend me, he has always been faithful. Ah, I shrink from him many times, in horror, because I know what he is; but I may not tell you. Look! Chunda Lal has never been out of sound of this whistle"—she drew a little silver whistle from her dress—"for a moment since that day when he came into the house of the slave-dealer in Mecca, except—"

Suddenly a wave of glorious color flooded her beautiful face, and swiftly she lowered her eyes, replacing the little whistle. Stuart's rebellious heart leaped madly, for whatever he might think of her almost incredible story, that sweet blush was no subterfuge, no product of acting.

"You almost drive me mad!" he said in a low voice. "You tell me so much, but you withhold so much that I am more bewildered than ever. I can understand your helplessness in an Eastern household, but why should you obey the behests of

this veiled monster in London, in New York, in Paris?"

She did not raise her eyes.

"I dare not tell you; but I dare not disobey him!"

"Who is he?"

"No one knows, because no one has ever seen his face. Ah, you are laughing, but I swear before Heaven I speak the truth! Indoors he wears a Chinese robe and a green veil. In passing from place to place, which he always does at night, he is attired in a kind of cowl which only exposes his eyes—"

"But how *can* such a fantastic being travel?"

"By road, on land, and in a steam-yacht, at sea. Why should you doubt my honesty?" She suddenly raised her glance to Stuart's face, and he saw that she had grown pale. "I have risked what I cannot tell you—risked it more than once—for you! I tried to call you on the telephone on the night when he set out from the house near Hampton Court to kill you, but I could get no reply, and—"

"Stop!" said Stuart, too much excited to note, at the time, that she had betrayed a secret. "It was *you* who rang up that night?"

"Yes. Why did you not answer?"

"Never mind! Your call saved my life. I shall not forget." He looked searchingly into her eyes. "But tell me what it all means! What or who is the Scorpion?"

(To be continued in the April number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

She flinched.

"The Scorpion is a passport. See!" From a little pocket in the coat of her costume she drew out a golden scorpion. "I have one." She replaced it hurriedly. "I dare not, dare not tell you more; but this much I had to tell you, because I shall never see you again!"

"What?"

"A French detective, a very clever man, learned a lot about the Scorpion, and he followed one of the members to England. This man killed him. Oh, I know I belong to a horrible organization!" she cried bitterly. "But I tell you I am helpless, and I have never aided in such a thing. You should know that! But all that the French detective found out he left with you—and I do not know if I succeeded in destroying it. I do not ask you. I do not care; but I leave England to-night. Good-by!"

She suddenly stood up. Stuart rose also. He was about to speak when Miska's expression changed. A look of terror crept over her face, and, hastily lowering her veil, she walked rapidly away from the table and out of the room.

Many curious glances followed the elegant figure to the door. Then those glances were directed upon Stuart.

Flushing with embarrassment, he settled the bill as quickly as possible, and hurried out of the hotel. Gaining the street, he looked eagerly right and left; but Miska had disappeared.

WILD GEESE

FLYING above us far on high,
Specks in the gray of the winter sky,
Floats down to earth their raucous cry.

Their leader—so is the legend told—
Is Judas, he who his Master sold
For thirty pieces of silvered gold.

Trailing behind him, his flock is seen—
The accursed souls of the vile and mean,
Who stoned and spat at the Nazarene!

Doomed to wander forever so,
Round and round the world they go;
No rest their weary wings may know.

But to us, who listen at night and hear,
Their harsh cry brings its message clear—
When the geese fly north, then spring is near!

Masie V. Caruthers